

小川麻衣子

Maiko ogawa presents

匂いは自て見た記憶よりも覚えている
といいますが、本当かな？
匂いなんてとっさに思い出せないけと
かいた時に
「あ！これはあの時のあの匂い」って
なるのかしら。

猫がいるからアロマを
焚けなくなってしまったけど、
仕事中にはハンカチに
少し染み込ませて楽しんでいます。
オススメはペパーミント！
歯磨き粉の匂いがします。

イラスト ★ 小川麻衣子
AD ★ 鳳木香
デザイン ★佐藤千恵＋ベイブ ノンノ スタジオ

ひとりぼっちの地球侵略

7

Maiko ogawa presents

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ひとりぼっちの地球侵略

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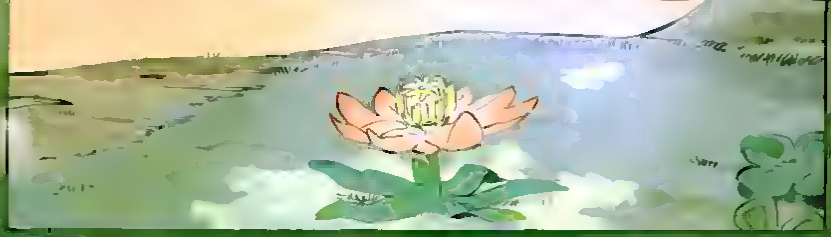
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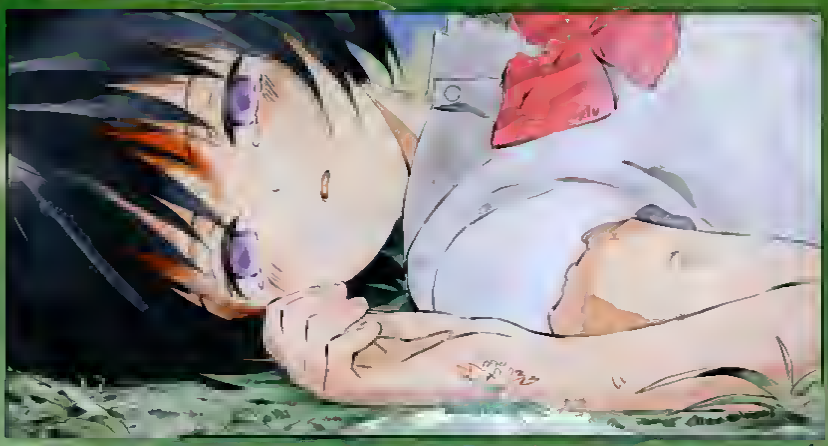
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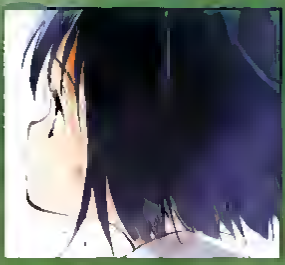
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知ってしまった真実を抱き日覚める。後戻りはもう、できない。


















第30話
Thousand miles


CHAPTER 30
Thousand Miles


NNNN-NGH...
WAKE UP!
MN...
AYLA-SAN!
AYLA-SAN... AYLA-SAN!
GET A GRIP, AYLA-SAN! SENPAI...
HUH? I'M STILL HERE? WHAT TIME IS IT NOW...?
WHAT IS IT...?
23:38
SENPAI HASN'T RETURNED YET!


EVEN DESPITE WHAT'S GOING ON, THIS IS REALLY WEIRD! IF SHE'S STILL FIGHTING, I SHOULD GO JOIN HER!
DO YOU SEE ANYTHING!?
GIVE ME A SECOND...
.....
NO... I DON'T SEE ANYTHING AT ALL. THE CITY IS PEACEFUL...
OK, WELL...
"OK, WELL" WHAT!?
THE PART OF GRANDMOTHER'S SECRET POWER THAT I GAVE YOU EARLIER ACTS AS A "LINK," WHICH MAKES ME SUPER TIRED IF I USE IT.
I CAN'T USE THE POWER OF MY EYES THE WAY I'D LIKE TO
USING IT DRAINS YOU THAT MUCH?
Ugh.

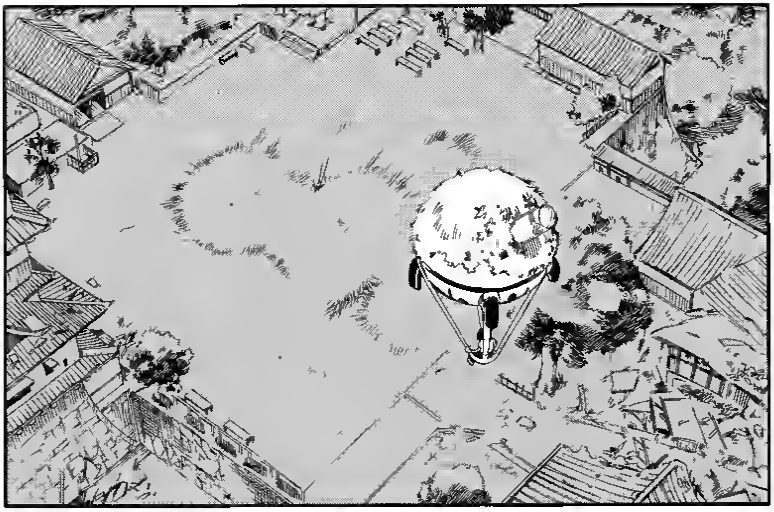

WHEN I STABBED YOU, NOZOMI RAN TO YOUR SIDE IMMEDIATELY.
.....
ARE N'T YOU ABLE TO SENSE ANYTHING?
THIS IS JUST MY GUT, BUT...
I DON'T THINK SHE'S DEAD,
BUT I CAN'T REALLY TELL WHERE SHE ACTUALLY IS YET.
KOICHI'S INTUITION HAS BEEN CUT OFF, AND SHE'S IN AN AREA WHERE MY EYES CAN'T SEE...
.....
TO BE HONEST, BEFORE I MADE CONTACT WITH YOU, I HAD A CONVERSATION WITH GRAND-MOTHER.
!
YUP, IT WAS EXACTLY HOW YOU'RE IMAGINING IT.
もふ


AYLA.
THE ONLY CHILD IN THE UNIVERSE WHO WILL INHERIT MY POWER.
THERE IS STILL SOMETHING I MUST GIVE YOU. YOU MUST MATURE QUICKLY, OR YOU WILL NOT BE ABLE TO POSSESS IT.


FOR THIS FIRST TIME, I WILL GUIDE YOU.
THERE IS NO NEED TO WORRY. IT IS A SIMPLE MATTER TO GET USED TO IT.
THINK OF IT AS BEING LIKE RIDING A BICYCLE.
ALTHOUGH IT APPEARS I AM SUPPORTING YOU, THE HONEST TRUTH IS THAT YOUR OWN POWER IS MORE THAN ENOUGH ONCE YOU BEGIN TO MOVE.

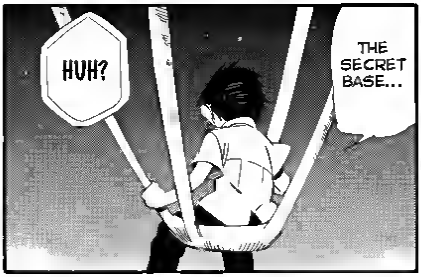

NGH...!
TH-THIS IS...
YOU ARE STILL A CHILD LACKING IN FOCUS, IT SEEMS...
DO YOU NOT HAVE SOMETHING YOU CAN ENTRUST YOURSELF TO? IF SO THEN GIVE YOUR HEART TO IT, QUIETLY, CALMLY...
A-AS IF I'D WALK AROUND WITH SOMETHING LIKE THA-
THEN I WILL SUSPEND COMMUNICATION FOR A MOMENT
YES, JUST LIKE THAT.
OH

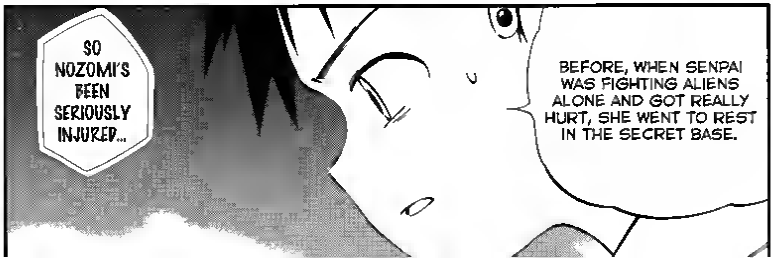

SO WHILE THE LINK WAS BEING INITIATED, I COULDN'T USE THE BISHAHORA'S POWER.
THIS ABILITY UTILIZES THE BISHAHORA AND AMPLIFIES MY OWN POWER. DURING THAT TIME, HER POWER IS LIMITED...
THAT'S WHY I CAN'T LOCATE NOZOMI NOW, AND MY ABILITY TO TRACK HER WAS ALSO SUSPENDED...
I DO HAVE THE TRACKING RESULTS FROM WHILE SHE WAS EN ROUTE...
WITH THESE, WE AT LEAST HAVE AN IDEA OF WHAT DIRECTION TO START INVESTIGATING.
T-THAT'S GREAT!
?
IT'S NOTHING. DON'T WORRY ABOUT IT.
HUH?
THAT'S RIGHT.. DURING THAT EARLIER BATTLE..




WHERE COULD SHE HAVE GONE AFTER THE BATTLE ENDED?
I CAN'T EVEN SEE A TRACE...




HUH?
THE SECRET BASE...

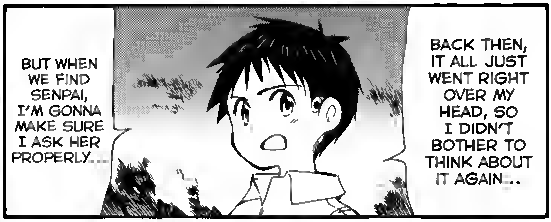

SO NOZOMI'S BEEN SERIOUSLY INJURED...
BEFORE, WHEN SENPAI WAS FIGHTING ALIENS ALONE AND GOT REALLY HURT, SHE WENT TO REST IN THE SECRET BASE.

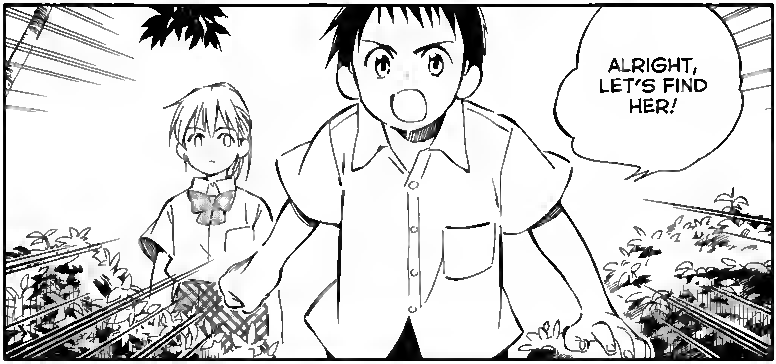

I KNEW WE SHOULDN'T HAVE LET HER GO OFF TO FIGHT ALONE!! DAMN IT!!
SHE MADE SURE TO PROPERLY EQUIP THE TRACKER, BUT WE CAN'T CONFIRM HER LOCATION.
FOR NOW, CAN YOU LEAD ME TO THAT PLACE?
IT'S BACK HERE.
THE SECRET BASE ITSELF ISN'T ACTUALLY HERE IN TOWN. IT'S CONNECTED TO A DIFFERENT PLACE ENTIRELY.
SO IT'S THE SAME AS GRAND-MOTHER'S MEETING ROOM, THEN
IF THIS IS NOZOMI'S TERRITORY, THEN I CAN'T INTERFERE IN IT. IF SHE WAS BEING PURSUED BY ENEMIES, IT'S LIKELY THAT SHE'D HAVE COME HERE.
HEY,
AREN'T THE POWERS OF ORBELIO AND ERAMEA REALLY SIMILAR?


I DON'T KNOW OF ANY OTHER PLANETS THAT USE THE SAME WEIRD MAGIC.
WELL, ORBELIANS DON'T HAVE THOSE "EYES," BUT THEY CAN CREATE THEIR OWN DIMENSIONS AND USE MAGIC I DON'T REALLY UNDERSTAND TOO!
TWIN PLANETS!?
COME TO THINK OF IT, I'VE HEARD THAT ERAMEA AND ORBELIO ARE TWIN PLANETS.
.....
WHAT DO YOU MEAN?
I WONDER WHAT KIND OF CONNECTION THEY HAVE TO EARTH...
THAT THE ORBELIANS USED TO LIVE HERE A LONG TIME AGO...
WHEN I FIRST MET SENPAI, SHE TOLD ME..

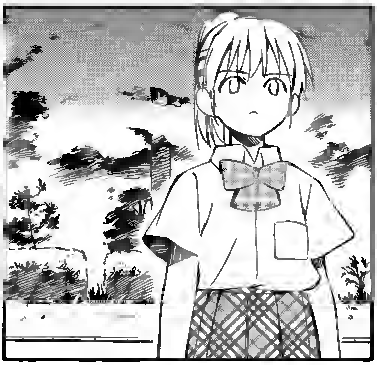





BUT WHEN WE FIND SENPAI, I'M GONNA MAKE SURE I ASK HER PROPERLY...
BACK THEN, IT ALL JUST WENT RIGHT OVER MY HEAD, SO I DIDN'T BOTHER TO THINK ABOUT IT AGAIN...


ALRIGHT, LET'S FIND HER!


ぎゅん




UM... I'LL TRY IT ONE MORE TIME.
HUH?
ガッ
ガッ
I CAN'T...
GET INTO THE SECRET BASE...


AND THE ONLY ONE WHO COULD DO THAT IS NOZOMI..
MOST LIKELY, THE KEY HAS BEEN CHANGED.
BUT WHY!?
I KNOW I'M RIGHT. NOZOMI HAS TO BE HERE.
SO THEN WHY WOULD SHE DO THIS...?
WHO KNOWS?
SHE PROBABLY DOESN'T LIKE INSENSITIVE MEN.
NO WAY THAT'S IT!
IF SHE REALLY IS HEAVILY INJURED, IT MAY JUST BE THAT SHE DOESN'T WANT YOU TO SEE HER IN HER CURRENT STATE.
WE COULD KEEP UP A PATROL FOR ENEMIES, BUT I THINK IT'S BETTER THAT WE END OUR FIGHTING HERE FOR TONIGHT
HUH!?
WELL THEN, I'M GOING HOME FOR NOW.

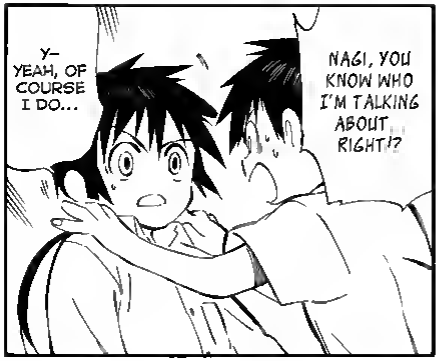

BUT...!
HAVE YOU FORGOTTEN JUST HOW MUCH YOU'VE ABUSED YOUR BODY TODAY?
I'M AMAZED YOU'RE STILL STANDING.
AND YOU NEED A CHANGE OF CLOTHES, TOO...
WE KNOW THAT NOZOMI IS HERE, AND IF SHE'S RESTING, WE SHOULD JUST COME BACK HERE TOMORROW.
OKAY...


HIROSE-KUN...
YOU KNOW...
WHAT'S UP, KOICHI?
NOTHING...

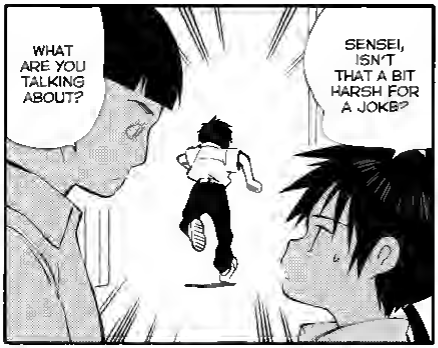

THREE DAYS HAVE PASSED, AND SENPAI STILL HASN'T SHOWN UP.
NOTHING AT ALL...
There was a terrorist attack.
at Matsuyoko Capital
SENPAI IS ALIVE...
I KNOW SHE IS...!


HEY, HIROSE.
WHY ARE YOU WEARING LONG SLEEVES? WE'RE STILL SOME TIME OFF FROM WINTER UNIFORMS.
AH! SORRY!
Y'KNOW, IT'S JUST MY BODY IS SO WEAK, AND IT'D BE BAD IF I STARTED FEELING COLD. .
YOU DON'T GET TO USE THAT EXCUSE AFTER PARTICIPATING IN THE ATHLETICS FESTIVAL.
KOBAYASHI-SENSEI— HAVE YOU HEARD ANYTHING FROM OOTORI-SENPAI?
SORRY, I DON'T KNOW WHO THAT IS.
WHAT CLASS ARE THEY IN?
OOTORI...?
HM...?


OOTORI-SENPAI, IN CLASS 2-6...
C'MON, SENSEI! YOU WARN HER ABOUT HER UNIFORM ALL THE TIME...!
.....
I DON'T THINK THERE'S ANYONE NAMED OOTORI IN 2-6.


NAGI, YOU KNOW WHO I'M TALKING ABOUT, RIGHT!?
Y- YEAH, OF COURSE I DO...


!!

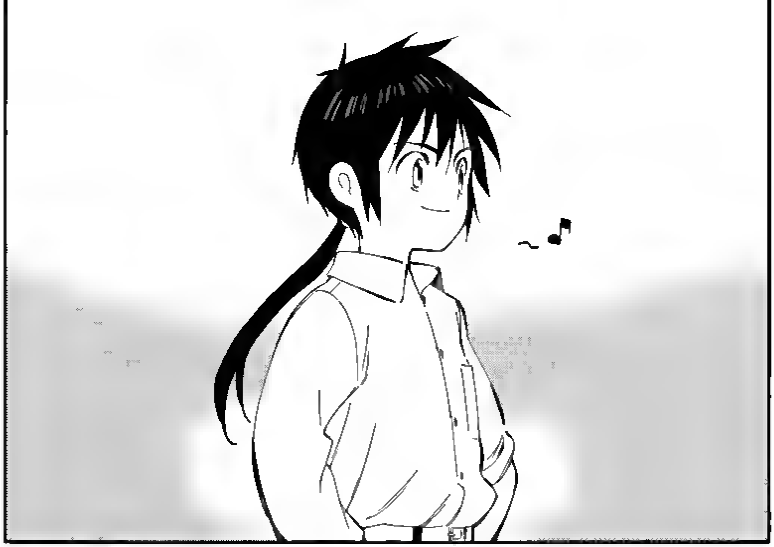

SENSEI, ISN'T THAT A BIT HARSH FOR A JOKE?
WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT?

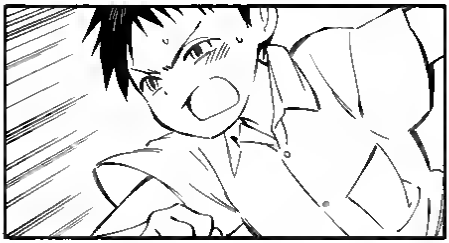

THERE'S NO WAY..
NO WAY...!!


HEY, SHOULDN'T THERE BE A DESK THERE?
NOPE. THERE'S ALWAYS JUST BEEN FIVE DESKS IN THIS ROW.
2-6
WAS THERE SOMEONE LIKE THAT HERE?
Dunno
OOTORI SENPAI...? NO... I DON'T THINK I'VE HEARD OF HER...
...WHAT KIND OF PERSON IS SHE?
SENPAI'S EXISTENCE IS FADING AWAY...


AYLA-SAN...
I REMEMBER HER, OF COURSE... BUT I DON'T KNOW HOW LONG THAT'LL LAST.
IT WON'T BE GOOD IF THIS KEEPS UP...
I WONDER IF SOME-THING IS HAPPENING IN THE SECRET BASE...
I DON'T KNOW! I DON'T KNOW ANYTHING ANYMORE!
SHE MIGHT HAVE ALREADY DIED...


AH...
AYLA-SENPAI! WHERE'S KOICHI?
HE WAS FEELING SICK AND WENT HOME EARLY.
SERI-OUSLY!?
I CAN SEE HE FELT GOOD ENOUGH TO RUN...
IT'S JUST YOUR IMAGINA-TION...

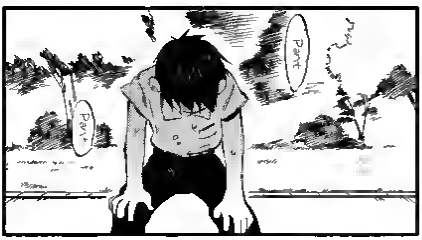











Pant
Pant


DSSH
CHIRP
CHIRP CHIRP
カリ
DAMN IT!!
WHY CAN'T I GET IN!?


AM I GOING TO FORGET YOU TOO!?
IS IT GOING TO BE LIKE TEN YEARS AGO WHEN I FORGOT ALL ABOUT YOU!!?
DAMN IT...
YOU'RE TAKING THIS TOO FAR...
YOU IDIOT!!


HUH? DID THIS REALLY GROW SO FAST?
IT'S WAY TOO EARLY FOR IT TO BE BLOOMING.
BUT MAN, THE OLIVE FLOWERS SMELL SO GOOD...
SO GOOD...
.....


THEY SHOULD BE INCLUDED IN THE DIRECTIONS
THE OLIVE FLOWERS HAVE A GOOD SMELL...
.....!

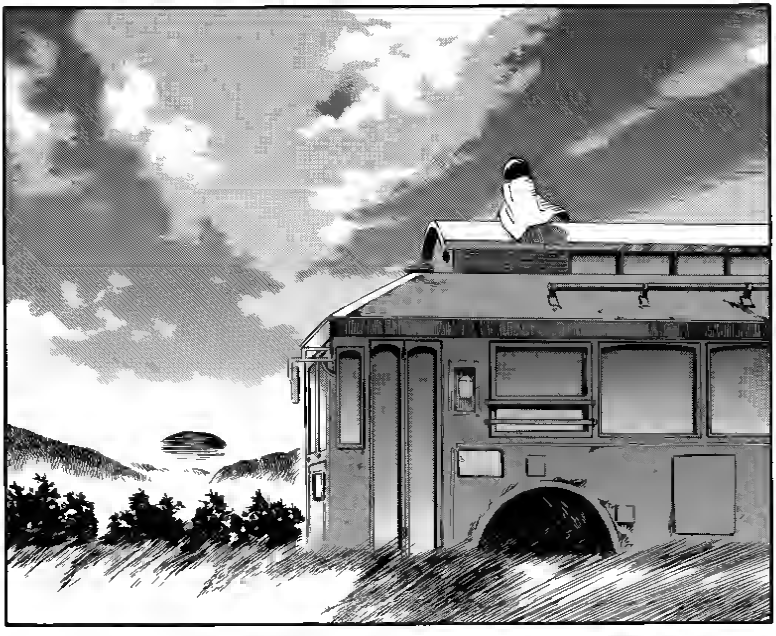

THAT'S RIGHT...
THAT MIGHT BE IT!
TAKE 7 STEPS TO THE LEFT, 24 STEPS TO THE RIGHT, AND THEN ANOTHER 13 STEPS TO THE LEFT...
YOU'LL FIND A KOBUSHI TREE.
I WAS ALWAYS FOCUSING ON HOW MANY STEPS IT WAS...
BUT THERE WAS SOMETHING MUCH MORE IMPORTANT
I SHOULD HAVE BEEN PAYING ATTENTION TO!
MAKE YOUR WAY THROUGH THE FIELD OF WINTER DAPHNES...


...AND HERE WE ARE. GOOD JOB.
Magnolia flowers fure white from March to April
THERE ARE TIMES WHEN I'M JEALOUS OF YOU, HIROSE-KUN.
I KNEW IT...!
THE AMOUNT OF STEPS DIDN'T MEAN ANYTHING AT ALL...
SENPAI MAKES THE PATH SO THAT SHE'LL PASS BY THE THINGS SHE LIKES...
THAT'S ALL THERE IS TO IT.
YOU HAVE A GENTLE OLDER BROTHER, NAGI, WHO'S BRIGHT AND CHEERFUL...
A KIND GRAND-FATHER, AND DREAMS OF THE FUTURE


YOU DON'T HAVE THE POWER TO KILL PEOPLE...
YOU DON'T HAVE TO THINK OF THINGS LIKE HOW TO RIP OUT THE HEARTS OF ALIENS...
HOW I'D LOVE TO ONLY FEAR HOW I'M GOING TO FIGURE OUT TOMORROW'S MATH LESSON..

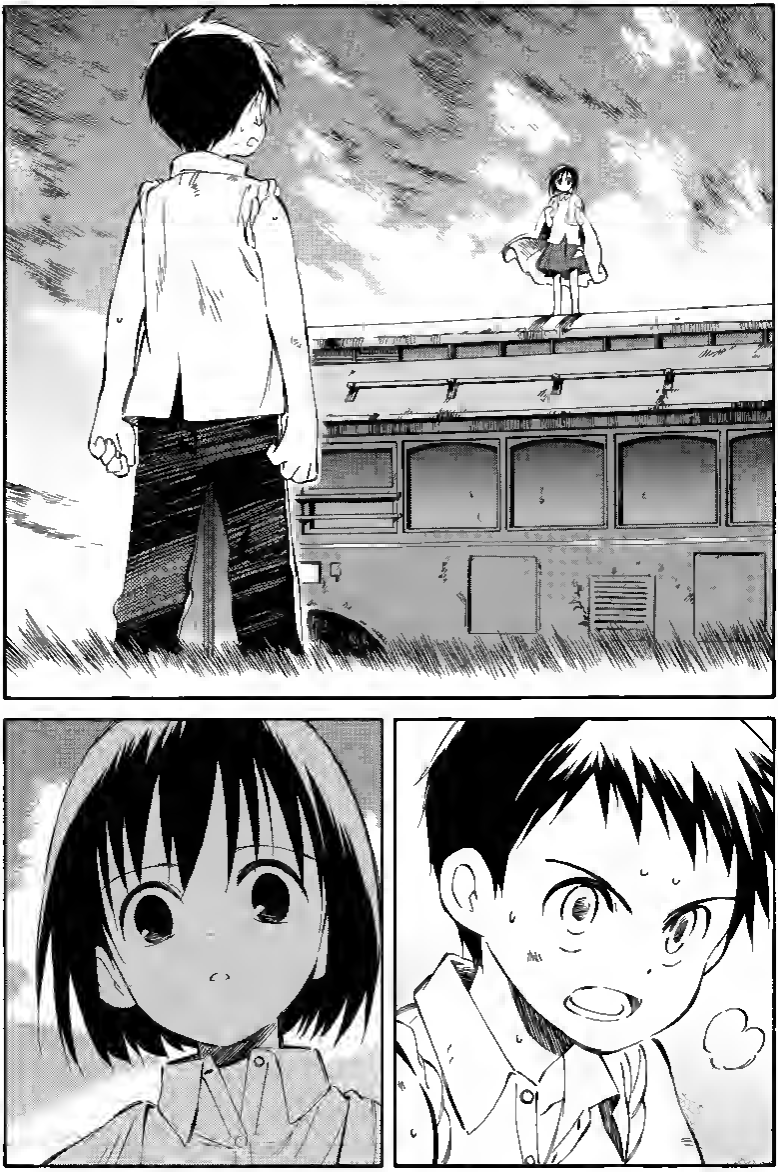

TEN YEARS AGO...
WHEN I SAW SENPAI AS A KID IN TOWN, I CHASED HER IN A DAZE AND ENDED UP THERE WITHOUT REALIZING IT.


THAT TIME MAY HAVE JUST BEEN A COINCI-DENCE...
BUT THIS TIME, I'M NOT LOOKING AT YOUR BACK.
I DON'T NEED TO CHASE AFTER ANYTHING...
...YEAH.
I'LL BE OKAY.











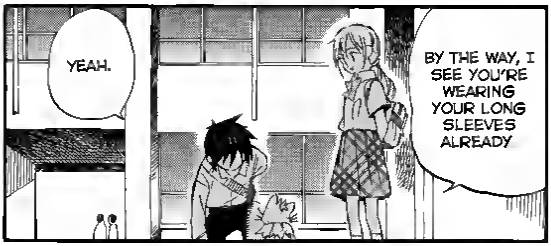
ひとりぼっちの地球侵略


Chapter 31
My Name Is


WHAT'S UP, RICO? DID KOICHI LEAVE YOU BEHIND?
MEOW
MROW
NAGI.
DO YOU HAVE A MOMENT?
SO CUTE.


SEE YOU, NAGI.
LATER.
'SUP, AYLA-SENPAI! WHAT'S GOING ON? YOU'RE BEING SO FORMAL!
SORRY. I JUST CAME TO TAKE RICO BACK WITH ME...
IT'S COOL. I WAS JUST THINKING IT WAS TIME FOR ME TO HEAD HOME.
YOU ALREADY KNOW ABOUT US, DON'T YOU?
.. SO WHY AREN'T YOU GOING AFTER US?

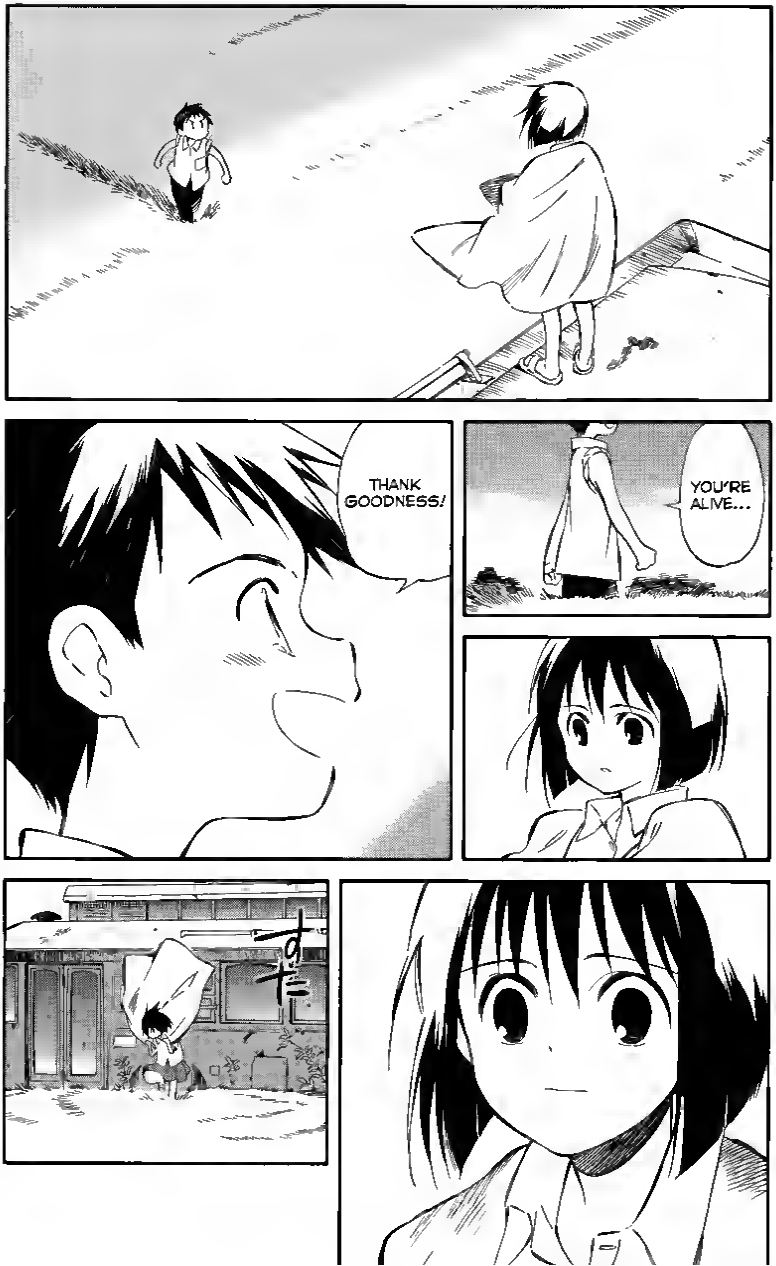

YOU GUYS ARE TOTALLY IMMERSED IN ABNORMAL SITUATIONS WHERE YOU'RE PUTTING YOUR NECKS ON THE LINE... BUT I THINK I'LL JUST STAY HERE AND LIVE A NORMAL LIFE.
Y'KNOW, THIS ORDINARY LIFE IS REALLY IMPORTANT TO ME.
STUFF LIKE FIGHTING AND THAT IS WAAAY TOO MUCH FOR ME.
I'M PRETTY SURE THIS IS WHAT KOICHI WANTS TOO


YEAH.
BY THE WAY, I SEE YOU'RE WEARING YOUR LONG SLEEVES ALREADY


I SEE...


Y'SEE, I'M A LITTLE COLD..


SO EVERYONE AT SCHOOL IS LOSING THEIR MEMORIES OF OOTORI-SENPAI...
I GUESS THAT WORKS TOO.


THANK GOODNESS!
YOU'RE ALIVE...
すた


REMEMBER THE DAY WHEN WE WERE CUTTING THE GRASS? YOU SAID THAT WHEN FALL CAME, YOU'D ENJOY HAVING THE FRAGRANT OLIVES AROUND, RIGHT?
E-ER...
HOW DID...
YOU GET HERE?
I JUST SEARCHED FOR THE FASTEST-BLOSSOMING FRAGRANT OLIVE TREE IN THE PARK!
SO THAT'S HOW I WAS ABLE TO FIND YOU!
IF YOU WERE ME...?
I JUST THOUGHT ABOUT WHAT I'D USE AS THE LANDMARKS IF I WERE YOU!
FROM THAT POINT, I WAS ABLE TO WALK AROUND TILL I FOUND THE RIGHT PATH!
IT WAS STILL A LOT OF WORK, THOUGH!

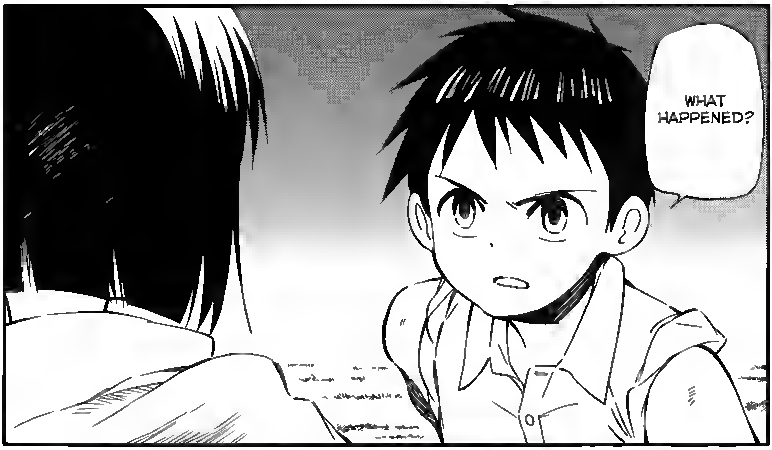

UH... YEAH.
? ?
YOU'RE HIROSE-KUN.
HUH?
BUT YOU AREN'T ME, HIROSE-KUN.
WHAT DID YOU THINK ABOUT?
ABOUT WHAT?
T-THAT'S WHY I THOUGHT ABOUT WHAT YOU'D DO AS HARD AS I COULD...
HUH?
I... DON'T FEEL LIKE SAYING.
IT WAS JUST TOO OBVIOUS IT WAS THE RIGHT NUMBER OF STEPS TO TAKE, BUT IT DIDN'T WORK UNTIL I REALIZED WHAT THE STEPS ACTUALLY MEANT.
WHAT WAS IMPORTANT WASN'T THE NUMBER, BUT THE THINGS ON THE WAY TO THE DESTINATION.
I WAS ORIGINALLY TRYING TO ENTER THE SECRET BASE FROM THE SASANQUA TREE LIKE I ALWAYS DO, BUT THAT WAS WRONG.


WHILE WALKING THROUGH THE FRAGRANT OLIVES, I SEARCHED THROUGH THE BUDDING TREES AND FLOWERS OF FALL FOR SOMETHING THAT HAD CHANGED.
IT WAS A GOOD THING THE NUMBER OF STEPS WASN'T ACTUALLY IMPORTANT..
WHAT'S IMPORTANT TO SENPAI IS A SENSE OF THE SEASONS
THE FIRST PASSWORD WAS THE FLOWERS THAT BUD BEFORE SPRING, BUT FALL HAD TO BE DIFFERENT.
.....
AND IF SHE WALKS FROM POINT TO POINT IN A STRAIGHT LINE..
IT CAME DOWN TO ASKING, "WHAT KIND OF PATH WOULD SENPAI WALK DOWN.."
.....


YOU CERTAINLY WALKED A LONG WAY...
HOW TROUBLE-SOME... IT'S MEANINGLESS IF THE PASSWORD ISN'T MORE DIFFICULT.
IT WAS CARELESS OF ME.
OH YEAH!
WHAT WAS THE DEAL WITH THAT, ANYWAY!? WHY'D YOU CHANGE THE SECRET BASE'S PASSWORD!?
EVERYONE IS FORGETTING ABOUT YOU, TOO! IT'S ENOUGH TO MAKE ME WONDER IF MY HEAD IS ON STRAIGHT!
!?
F-FOR-GETTING?
WHAT DO YOU MEAN?


HUH?
TH-THAT WAS YOUR POWER, RIGHT?
BECAUSE I KNOW ABOUT SENPAI'S POWERS FROM TEN YEARS AGO...
I THOUGHT YOU WERE THE ONLY ONE WHO COULD DO SOMETHING LIKE THAT...
.....
くり...
I WONDER ABOUT THAT... I HAVEN'T BEEN THINKING OF ANYTHING THESE LAST FEW DAYS...
COULD I HAVE REALLY DONE SOMETHING LIKE THAT?
I GUESS...
IF I REALLY WISHED FOR IT, IT COULD HAPPEN...




WHAT HAPPENED?

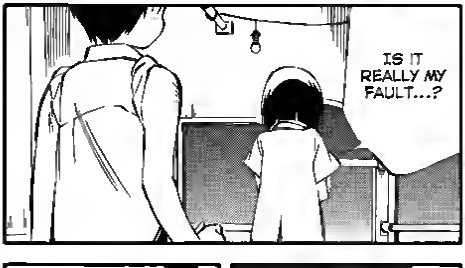

YOU MET WITH ONE OF YOUR FRIENDS FROM ORBELIO!?




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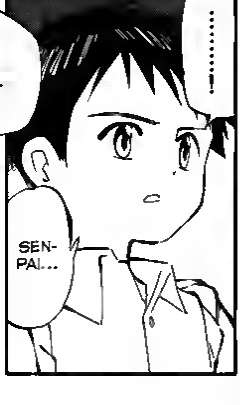

WHEN I MET HER, SHE ACTUALLY TRIED TO KILL ME.
BUT SHE ISN'T ON FRIENDLY TERMS WITH ME AT ALL.
I THOUGHT SHE WAS MY FRIEND...
I TOLD HER ABOUT THE EXISTENCE OF THE SECRET BASE, WHICH IS WHY I HAD TO CHANGE THE PASSWORD.
I SEE...
SHE SAID THAT ORBELIO WAS DESTROYED BECAUSE OF ME.
THAT TEN YEARS AGO, I WAS GIVEN A MISSION TO SAVE THE PLANET AND FAILED...
I DON'T KNOW... I JUST DON'T KNOW ANYTHING ANYMORE.
WHY I FAILED, IF I ACTUALLY FAILED...
I DON'T UNDER-STAND ANY OF IT...


UNTIL NOW, I'VE BEEN OKAY WITH HAVING ONLY FRAGMENTS OF MY MEMORY...
BUT NOW IT'S BECAUSE OF THAT THAT NO MATTER WHAT I THINK, I KEEP HITTING THE SAME ROAD-BLOCK IN MY HEAD!


IS IT REALLY MY FAULT...?


IS IT REALLY MY FAULT THAT OREBELIO WAS...!?


THE PORT..


.....!
SEN-PAI...


MAYBE I SHOULD OPEN IT...
YOU IDIOT! WHAT ARE YOU SAYING!?
WE'RE ALL SCREWED IF YOU DO THAT!!
HIROSE-KUN...
SO DON'T EVEN SAY SOME-THING LIKE THAT AS A JOKE!
THE WHOLE POINT IS THAT WE'VE BEEN FIGHTING TO MAKE SUKE IT STAYS CLOSED!
!!
YOU'RE TALKING LIKE YOU KNOW WHAT'LL HAPPEN IF THE PORT IS OPENED...


HMMM?
ON THAT NOTE, HIROSE-KUN...
R-REALLY? WELL, I'M JUST GOING BY WHAT RICO SAID EARLIER... IT JUST SOUNDS LIKE BAD NEWS!
IN THIS MIRROR...
THERE'S THAT DREAM THAT YOU SAW THANKS TO GRAND-MOTHER...
OH RIGHT! THERE'S SOMETHING I WANTED TO ASK YOU! YOU SAID A LONG TIME AGO ON EARTH...
AH!
HIROSE-KUN?
DON'T LIE TO ME.
Y-YEAH...?


UWAAAAAH!!!
DON'T CHANGE THE SUBJECT!
TELL ME NOW!
WHAT DID YOU HEAR!?
ER... WELL, IT'S NOT LIKE I HEARD IT AS MUCH AS I SAW IT, Y'SEE... GYAAAH!!

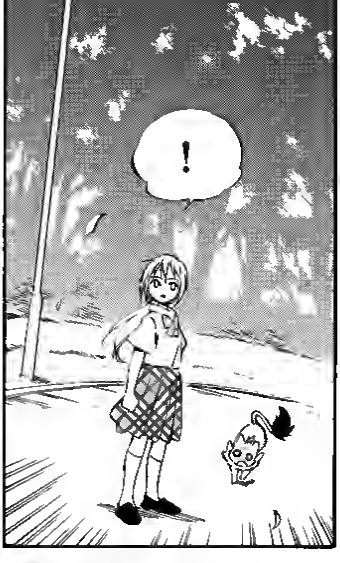

HIROSE-KUN...
YOU ALREADY KNEW THAT ORBELIO HAD BEEN DESTROYED..?
YEAH...
BUT I COULDN'T TELL YOU!
I FIGURED KNOWING WOULD JUST MAKE YOU SAD...
YOU SHOULDN'T HAVE DONE THAT!
I AM OOTORI NOZOMI!
A YEAR AGO, WHEN I WOKE UP, I REMEMBERED I HAD THIS NAME!
I REMEMBERED THE NAME I TOOK ON THIS PLANET WHEN I COULDN'T EVEN REMEMBER MY TRUE NAME!

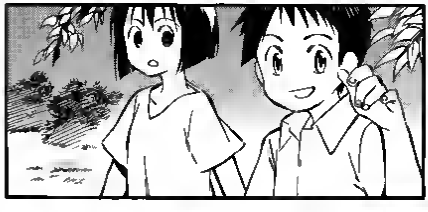

I'M NAMED FOR THE "HOPE" PEOPLE HAVE WHEN THEY'RE IN THE DEPTHS OF DESPAIR, RIGHT?
IT'S NOT SOMETHING I'D SIMPLY BE SAD OVER!
IF I DON'T KNOW THE TRUTH OF WHAT HAPPENED, I CAN'T BE SAD OR UPSET ABOUT IT!
I WON'T BE HELD DOWN BY SOMEONE JUST BECAUSE THEY LIKE ME BETTER IGNORANT!
IF I AM...
TO TRULY BE MYSELF...
I WANT TO KNOW EVERYTHING...


SORRY, NAGI...
AT THE VERY LEAST...
I DON'T WANT TO SEE A STRANGER'S FACE WHEN SENPAI IS ASKING ME ABOUT HER SINS.
THAT'S RIGHT...
AT THAT MOMENT, I WAS SPELL-BOUND BY THE SENPAI BEFORE ME NOW
I FEEL LIKE WE REALLY CAN PROTECT EARTH IF WE'RE TOGETHER..


I'LL TELL YOU EVERYTHING ABOUT THE SCENE THAT GRANDMA SHOWED ME!!
I GET IT! I'LL TELL YOU EVERY-THING!!
!!
WE'RE IN THIS TOGE-THER!!
RICO AND AYLA-SENPAI ARE WORRIED ABOUT YOU
BUT IF YOU WANT ME TO TALK, YOU HAVE TO COME OUTSIDE.
...OKAY.

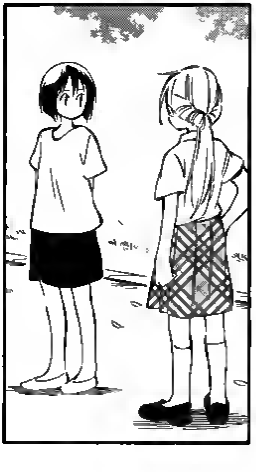

KOICHI!


!

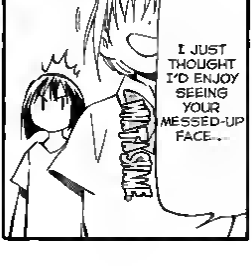



WE'RE BACK, RICO.
AND THE ORBELIAN' DON'T YOU GUYS JUST DISAPPEAR ON ME LIKE THAT!


WHAT?




Y-YES.
HIROSE-KUN, WAS SHE REALLY WORRIED ABOUT ME?


I JUST THOUGHT I'D ENJOY SEEING YOUR MESSED-UP FACE...
CUTE SMILE


IT SEEMS SHE SHOWED HIROSE-KUN WHAT HAPPENED TEN YEARS AGO...
YOU ONLY JUST CAME OUTSIDE, SO WHAT'S WITH THIS ALL OF A SUDDEN...?
I EXPLAINED IT TO YOU A MILLION TIMES!
BUT TO BE HONEST, I DON'T REALLY UNDER-STAND IT.
HUH?
I'D LIKE TO MEET WITH YOUR GRAND-MOTHER.
AH, AYLA...
BUT YOU TURNED DARK AND GREW WINGS WHICH LET YOU FLY AND TURN THE CITY BACK TO NORMAL AND CLOSE THE PORT AND STUFF! BUT YOU COULDN'T BRING DEAD PEOPLE BACK TO LIFE, AND NAGI'S GOT A GRUDGE AGAINST YOU 'CAUSE OF THAT!
WHEN YOU WERE LITTLE, YOU WERE GATHERING "MEMORIES OF THE STARS" AND OPENED THE PORT, BUT THEN AN ALIEN SHIP THAT WASN'T ORBELIAN CAME THROUGH AND WRECKED THE CITY!
I GOT THAT THE PORT WAS OPENED AND CLOSED TEN YEARS AGO.
DID YOU GET ANY OF THAT...?

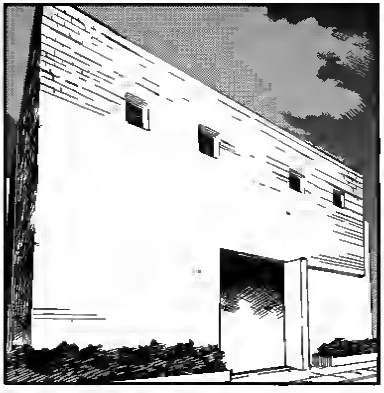

I SEE...
WE'RE KIND OF IN A VICIOUS CYCLE HERE, SO I FIGURED THE EASIEST WAY TO SOLVE THIS WOULD BE TO ASK GRANDMOTHER DIRECTLY.
OKAY, I'LL EXPLAIN IT FROM THE TOP AGAIN!
ALRIGHT THEN.
IF POSSIBLE, I'D LIKE TO SEE HER IMMEDIATELY.
HONESTLY, I THOUGHT IT WOULD BE GOOD FOR THE TWO OF YOU AND I TO MEET WITH GRANDMOTHER AS WELL.
WHY'S THAT?
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さ 29-35

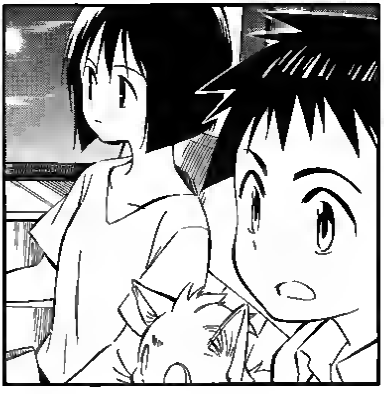

WHOAA! THESE SEATS ARE SO FLUFFY!
KOICHI! I LIKE THESE EARTH RIDEY THINGS!
IS THIS JUICE? CAN I DRINK IT?
THINGS ALWAYS GET SO NOISY WHEN YOU'RE AROUND..


ORBELIO'S ORIGIN AND ITS RELATIONSHIP TO EARTH...


I WANTED TO TALK WITH GRANDMOTHER AS WELL, BUT SHE'S SO STUBBORN. SHE WON'T SAY A WORD UNLESS I BRING YOU TOO.
WHAT ON EARTH COULD SHE WANT TO TALK ABOUT THAT INVOLVES US TOO?







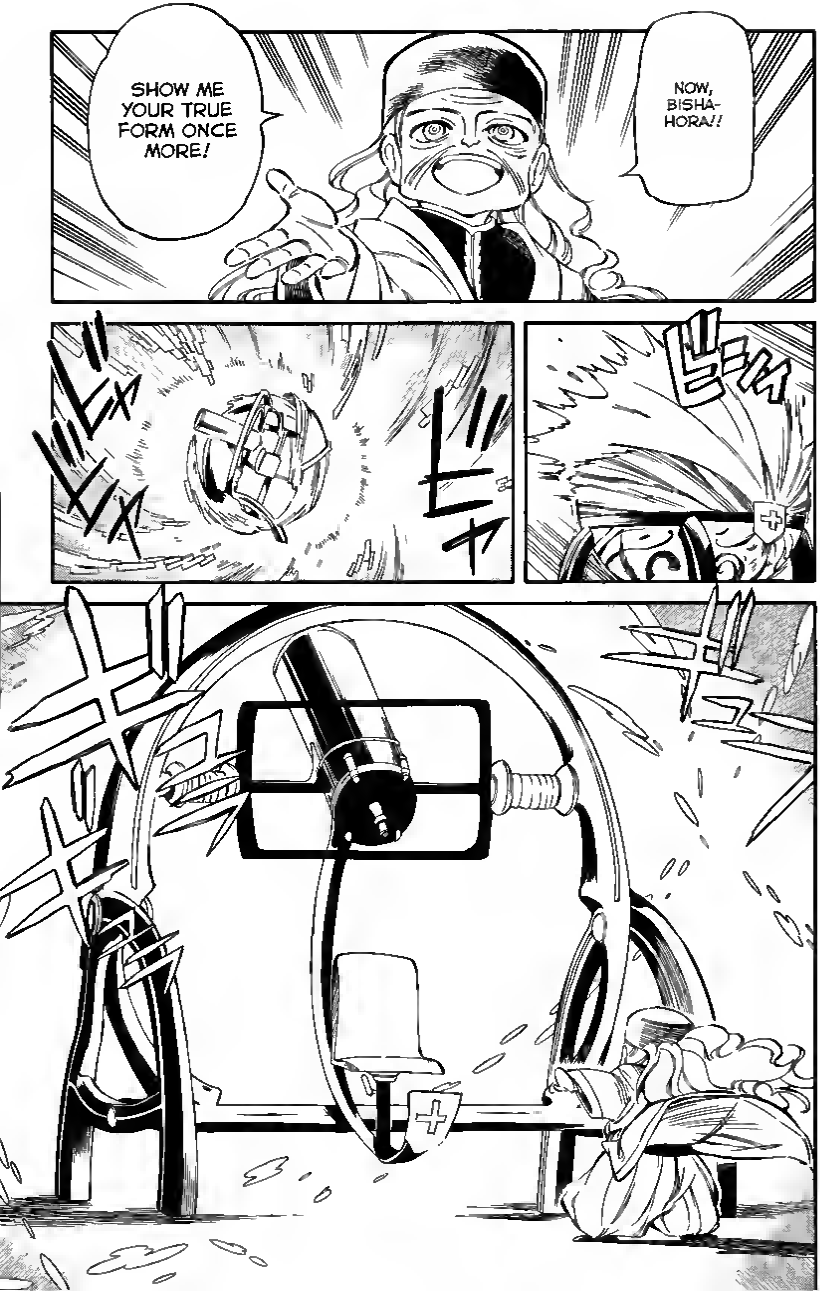



OH.
I HEARD YOU WERE COMING AND GOT THIS PREPARED IN A HURRY.
JUST FOLLOW ME FURTHER IN.
WELL, WELL! YOU'VE COME AT LAST.
HUH? IT'S PITCH BLACK...
I WORKED QUITE HARD, GETTING THIS READY FOR YOU
AFTER ALL, IT'S BEEN QUITE A WHILE SINCE I HAD TO ACTIVATE THIS...
!?


THAT'S THE BISHAHORA! WHAT'S IT HERE FOR?
HEH HEH HEH...
I JUST NEED TO SWAP THESE WIRES...
OOH...
I'M ONLY INTERESTED IN WHAT HAPPENED TEN YEARS AGO...
OH? IS THAT SO?
WHAT I'M GOING TO TELL YOU CONCERNS BOTH ORBELIO AND THIS EARTH... OR TO USE THE ORBELIAN NAME FOR IT, "ARSHA."


HOW COULD YOU FORGET SUCH AN IMPORTANT CONVERSATION?
IT WAS ALL I COULD DO TO JUST KEEP UP WITH WHAT WAS GOING ON BACK THEN! I TRIED MY BEST TO ASK HER MORE ABOUT IT, BUT SHE THOUGHT I WAS TRYING TO DODGE ANOTHER QUESTION!
I ALREADY TOLD HIROSE-KUN ABOUT THAT.
SO I WANTED TO DISCUSS HOW THE ORBELIAN PEOPLE CAME TO EARTH LONG AGO.
HMM...
WELL...
DO YOU KNOW *WHEN* THE ORBELIANS LIVED HERE?
THANK GOODNESS GRANDMOTHER IS HERE, HUH?
.....
She sure is funny
S-SURE.
ANYTHING I DON'T KNOW ABOUT, YOU CAN ADD IN AT THE APPROPRIATE TIME.
WELL, WE CAN DISCUSS ALL OF IT IN THE PROPER ORDER, INCLUDING WHAT HAPPENED TEN YEARS AGO!


"THIS PLANET BELONGS TO THE KING OF ORBELIO"...
SENPAI TOLD ME THAT TEN
...
ALRIGHT, IT'S DONE!
THE KING...


SHOW ME YOUR TRUE FORM ONCE MORE!
NOW, BISHA-HORA!
ビュン
ビュン
ビュン
ビュン


THE BISHAHORA WAS ONCE THE MOBILE OBSERVATION UNIT I RODE.
IF I FELT LIKE IT, IT COULD EVEN TRAVEL INTO SPACE.
NOW... WHERE TO BEGIN THIS CONVERSATION?
キィ…
HOW ABOUT WE BEGIN WITH OBELIO AND MY HOME OF ERAMEA?
THE PART YOU WANT TO HEAR IS COMING UP, SO BE PATIENT.
GRANDMOTHER


ERAMEA AND ORBELIO ARE 2 MILLION, 390 THOUSAND LIGHT YEARS AWAY FROM EARTH, AND WERE BORN IN THE CENTER OF THE GALAXY.
13 AND A HALF BILLION YEARS AGO, ORBELIO WAS BORN. AND 300 MILLION YEARS AFTER THAT, ERAMEA, ORBELIO'S YOUNGER BROTHER, WAS BORN.
WAH!
THESE TWO PLANETS WERE LIKE A SPARKLING SAPPHIRE AND TOPAZ IN THEIR BEAUTY.


H-HEY...!
YOU'RE BEING TAKEN TO THE PLACES WITHIN THE BISHAHORA'S MEMORIES TO A SCENE AT ORBELIO'S OLDEST POINT.
WHERE ARE...?

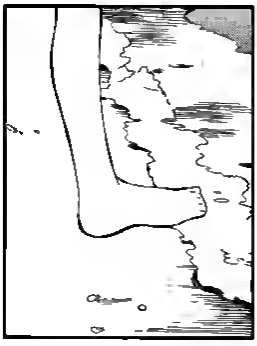

BEHIND YOU!


Chapter 32
Secrets of the Stars


THAT'S...
IT'S SO CLOSE!
THAT'S ERAMEA.
!





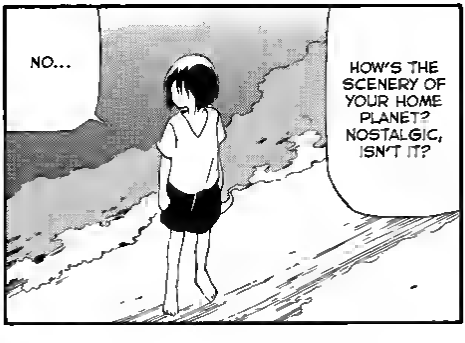


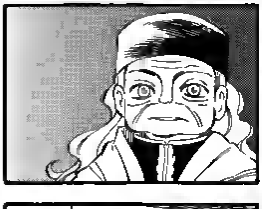



THIS WIND...
AND THIS SCENT TOO...
.....
YOU CANNOT GO BEYOND THE SILVER SCREEN
THE BISHAHORA IS ABLE TO CREATE A FACSIMILE OF REALITY, BUT THE FILM ISN'T ENDLESS.


EIGHTY-!?
ROUGHLY EIGHTY MILLION YEARS AGO, YES.
...WAS THIS ALWAYS THE SCENERY ON ORBELIO?


I NEVER KNEW THE OUTDOORS WAS THIS VAST...
I DON'T REALLY KNOW ANYTHING ABOUT ORBELIO...


NO...
HOW'S THE SCENERY OF YOUR HOME PLANET? NOSTALGIC, ISN'T IT?

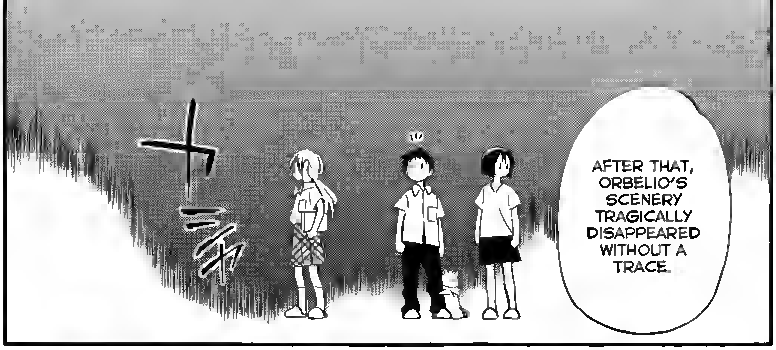



YOU ARE...

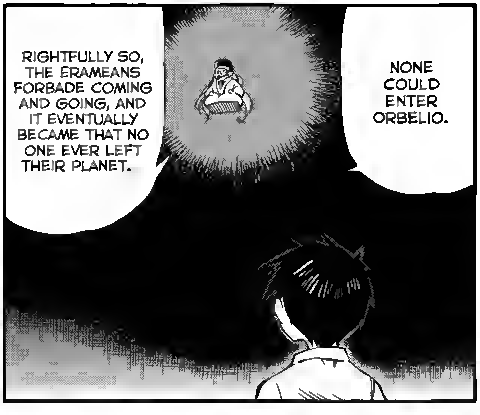

FROM THE MINUTE I WAS AWARE OF MY SURROUNDINGS, I WAS ALWAYS IN A WHITE ROOM. .


ERAMEA AND ORBELIO ARE SIBLING PLANETS, BUT THOSE WHO WERE BORN AND DWELL ON THESE PLANETS ARE OF DIFFERENT DISPOSITIONS.
NO...
LET US RETURN TO THE CONVERSATION AT HAND
THE ERAMEANS, WHO DISLIKED STRIFE, WISHED TO LIVE IN PEACE ON THE PLANET THEY WERE BORN ON,
WHILE THE OREBELIANS HAD THE SPIRITS OF FRONTIERSMEN, AND QUICKLY USED THEIR SCIENTIFIC PROWESS TO BECOME ONE OF THE MORE HIGHLY EVOLVED RACES IN THE UNIVERSE.
WHEN THEY BECAME ACQUAINTED WITH ONE ANOTHER, THINGS WENT WELL.
THE ORBELIANS HAD A SPECIAL "POWER," WHILE THE ERAMEANS HAD THEIR SPECIAL "EYES."
THEY HAD A MUTUAL RESPECT FOR ONE ANOTHER, AND NO REASON TO INVADE THE OTHER'S TERRITORY.

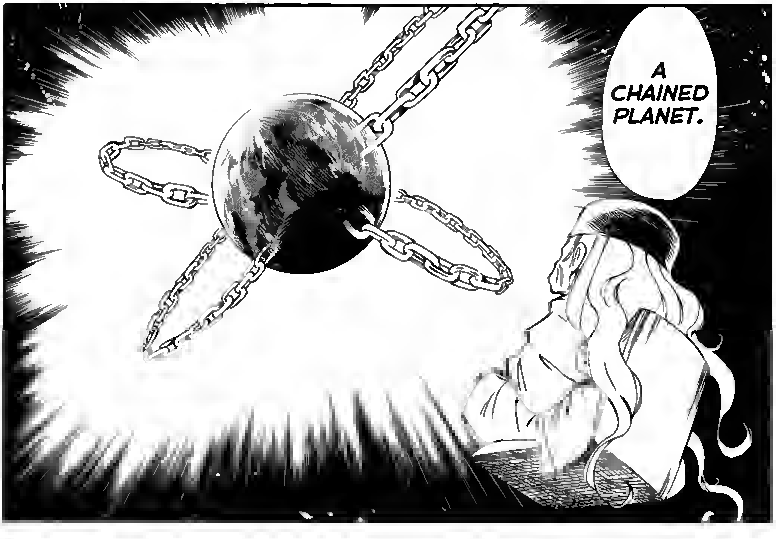

HOWEVER, THE TRAILBLAZING ORBELIANS REALIZED SOMETHING...
OR NO, I SHOULD SAY THEY BECAME *CONVINCED* OF IT.
WITHIN THE UNIVERSE, OTHER BEINGS WITH THE SAME LEVEL OF EVOLUTION AND INTELLIGENCE, OTHER PLANETS WITH SPECIAL POWERS, SIMPLY DID NOT EXIST...
AND THIS FOSTERED DANGEROUS THOUGHTS WITHIN THE ORBELIANS. THOUGHTS THAT CHANGED THEIR APPEARANCE AS TIME WENT BY.

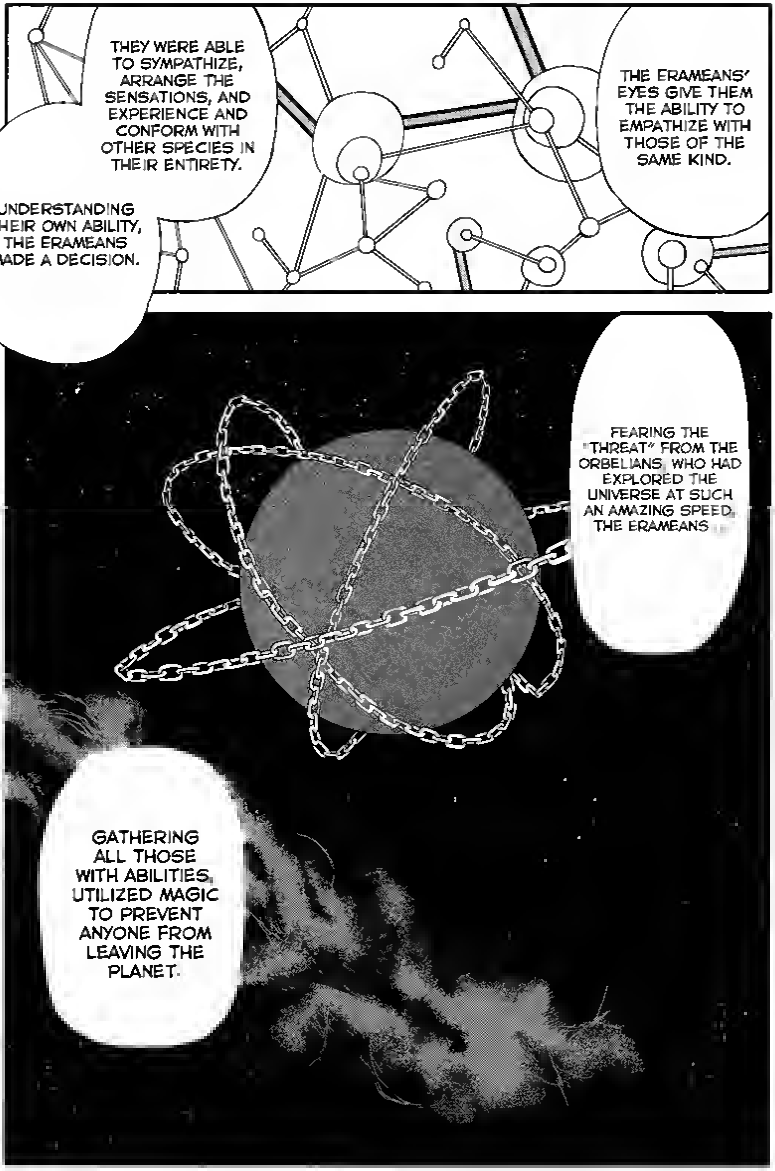

AFTER THAT, ORBELIO'S SCENERY TRAGICALLY DISAPPEARED WITHOUT A TRACE.

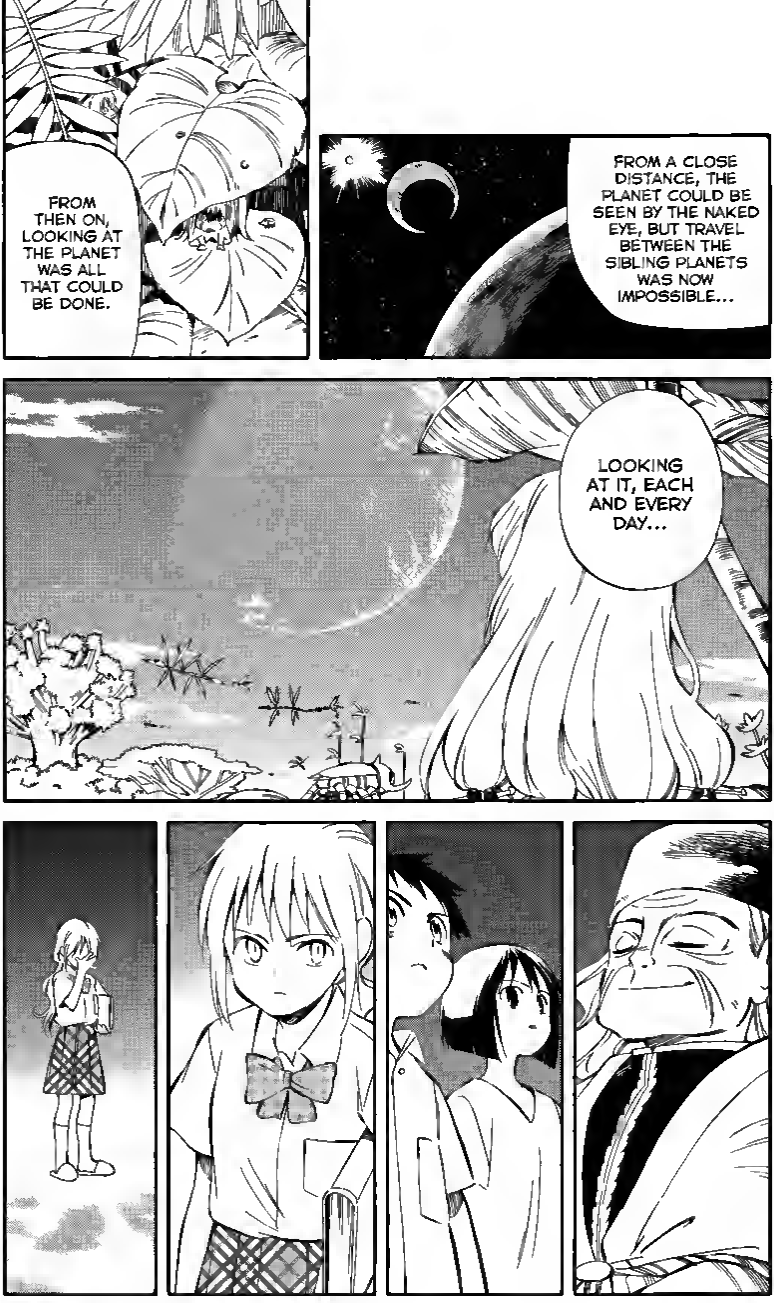

WAIT, THAT'S LIKE...


NONE COULD ENTER ORBELIO.
RIGHTFULLY SO, THE ERAMEANS FORBADE COMING AND GOING, AND IT EVENTUALLY BECAME THAT NO ONE EVER LEFT THEIR PLANET.

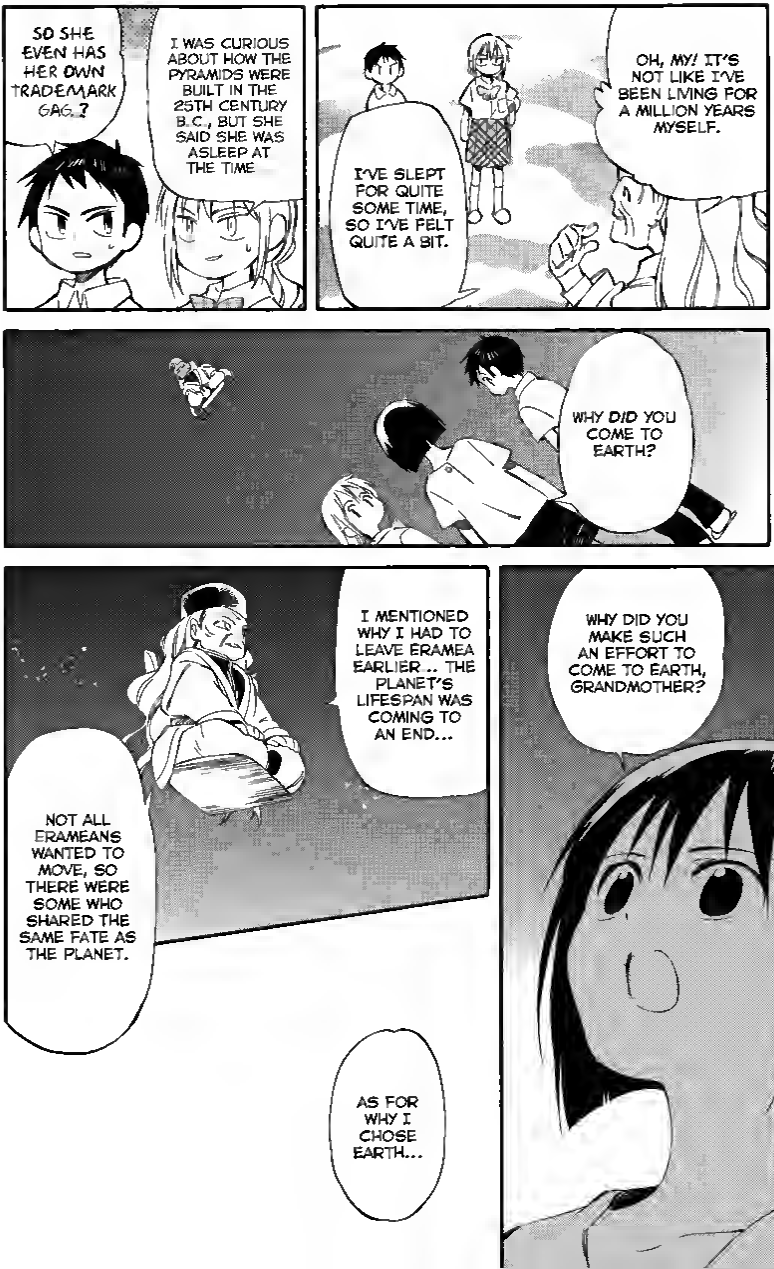

NO, THAT'S NOT RIGHT. THIS IS...


A CHAINED PLANET.


THEY WERE ABLE TO SYMPATHIZE, ARRANGE THE SENSATIONS, AND EXPERIENCE AND CONFORM WITH OTHER SPECIES IN THEIR ENTIRETY.
THE ERAMEANS' EYES GIVE THEM THE ABILITY TO EMPATHIZE WITH THOSE OF THE SAME KIND.
UNDERSTANDING THEIR OWN ABILITY, THE ERAMEANS MADE A DECISION.
FEARING THE "THREAT" FROM THE ORBELIANS, WHO HAD EXPLORED THE UNIVERSE AT SUCH AN AMAZING SPEED, THE ERAMEANS
GATHERING ALL THOSE WITH ABILITIES, UTILIZED MAGIC TO PREVENT ANYONE FROM LEAVING THE PLANET.

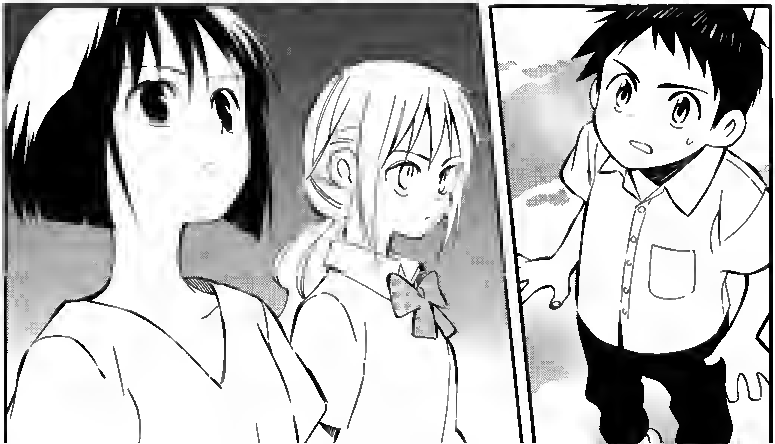

FROM THEN ON, LOOKING AT THE PLANET WAS ALL THAT COULD BE DONE.
FROM A CLOSE DISTANCE, THE PLANET COULD BE SEEN BY THE NAKED EYE, BUT TRAVEL BETWEEN THE SIBLING PLANETS WAS NOW IMPOSSIBLE...
LOOKING AT IT, EACH AND EVERY DAY...


ORIGINALLY, IT WAS SAID THAT ORBELIO TAUGHT THEM HOW TO USE THEIR "POWER," BUT IT WAS THE UNITED EFFORTS OF THOUSANDS OF ERAMEANS THAT CONTINUED TO PROTECT THE PLANET.
AT LEAST UNTIL ERAMEA REACHED THE END OF ITS LIFESPAN
SO ERAMEA IS GONE TOO?
"TOO?"
ORBELIO DOESN'T EXIST ANYMORE. THEY MODIFIED THE PLANET TOO MUCH, AND IT EXPLODED..
EXPLO-DED!?
I SEE..
ERAMEA AND ORBELIO ARE BOTH VERY OLD PLANETS .. BUT THERE SHOULD HAVE BEEN THOUSANDS MORE YEARS BEFORE IT DIED.
EVEN THOUGH I CAME TO EARTH A MILLION YEARS AGO..
A MIL...


SO SHE EVEN HAS HER OWN TRADEMARK GAG.?
I WAS CURIOUS ABOUT HOW THE PYRAMIDS WERE BUILT IN THE 25TH CENTURY B.C., BUT SHE SAID SHE WAS ASLEEP AT THE TIME
I'VE SLEPT FOR QUITE SOME TIME, SO I'VE FELT QUITE A BIT.
OH, MY! IT'S NOT LIKE I'VE BEEN LIVING FOR A MILLION YEARS MYSELF.
WHY DID YOU COME TO EARTH?
I MENTIONED WHY I HAD TO LEAVE ERAMEA EARLIER .. THE PLANET'S LIFESPAN WAS COMING TO AN END...
NOT ALL ERAMEANS WANTED TO MOVE, SO THERE WERE SOME WHO SHARED THE SAME FATE AS THE PLANET.
AS FOR WHY I CHOSE EARTH...
WHY DID YOU MAKE SUCH AN EFFORT TO COME TO EARTH, GRANDMOTHER?


THAT'S RIGHT.
IT'S WHAT YOU NOW CALL THE "PORT."
EARTH HAS THE SAME SECRET SEALING TECHNIQUE PROTECTING IT AS ERAMEA..
BUT I AM AWARE OF A LONE ORBELIAN YOUTH WHO CAME TO EARTH FOUR BILLION YEARS AGO.
THERE AREN'T MANY DETAILS KNOWN ABOUT THE HISTORY OF BEINGS THAT CAN USE THAT TECHNIQUE...
BUT THE MOST SURPRISING THING WAS...
AT THE TIME HE ARRIVED ON EARTH, VERY LITTLE LIFE THERE HAD MANAGED TO ADVANCE TO A POINT WHERE IT WAS ON LAND RATHER THAN IN THE OCEAN. IT WAS DURING HIS STAY ON EARTH THAT HE MADE IT INTO A CHAINED PLANET MUCH LIKE ERAMEA AND CLOSED IT OFF.


THOUSANDS OF ERAMEANS BRAVED DANGER SO GREAT THEY COULD HAVE LOST THEMSELVES AND LINKED THEMSELVES TOGETHER TO SEAL OFF THE PLANET...
BUT HE WAS ABLE TO PERFORM THIS FEAT ALL ON HIS OWN.



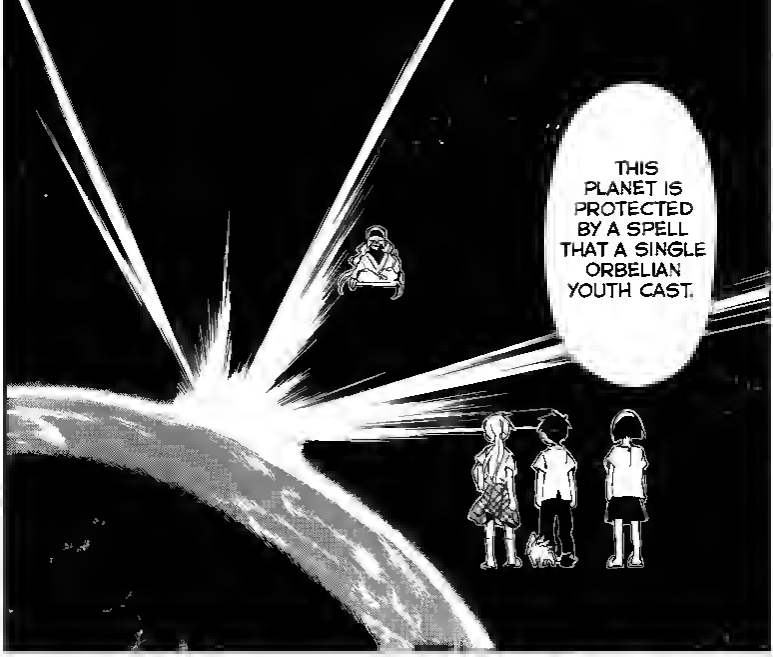

THE ART USED ON EARTH WAS MORE LIKE A GENTLE RIBBON, SOFTLY WRAPPING ITSELF AROUND THE ENTIRETY OF THE PLANET.
IT BECAME ANOTHER "CHAINED PLANET" LIKE ERAMEA... BUT RATHER THAN A SEAL THAT CHAINED THE PLANET DOWN, RESTRAINING ITS FREEDOM...
IT WAS AS IF IT WERE CREATED WITH THE INTENTION OF SOMEDAY REVIVING RELATIONS WITH OTHER PLANETS, AND ACTED JUST AS ITS NAME, THE "PORT" IMPLIES, ALLOWING DIFFERENT PEOPLE TO PASS THROUGH... AT LEAST, THAT'S THE THEORY.
AH... WELL, HE WENT ON TO BECOME EVEN MORE FAMOUS AFTER DOING THAT.
TO BE ABLE TO DO SOMETHING LIKE THAT ON HIS OWN... JUST WHO WAS THAT PERSON?
AND THE PORT NOT BEING AS RESTRICTIVE AS THE CHAINS
MANY OF MY COMRADES FELL IN THE ATTEMPT TO REACH EARTH... THAT I WAS ABLE TO GET IN IS THANKS TO THEIR SACRIFICE




AFTER HE RETURNED FROM EARTH, HE BECAME THE 144TH KING OF ORBELIO, AND SEIZED ENOUGH POWER TO AMASS ONE OF THE BIGGEST EMPIRES IN THE GALAXY.


THE ORBELIAN EMPIRE, AS IT WAS CALLED...
IT WAS SO GREAT THAT NOT A SINGLE PLANET WASN'T AFFECTED IN SOME WAY BY ITS POWER.

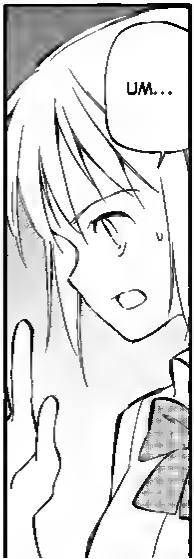

THIS PLANET BELONGS TO THE KING
AH...
THE KING...


THIS PLANET IS PROTECTED BY A SPELL THAT A SINGLE ORBELIAN YOUTH CAST.


.. AND THAT IS ALL I KNOW OF THE CONNECTION BETWEEN ORBELIO AND EARTH.




YOU'RE RIGHT. WHY DO THE ALIENS KEEP GOING OUT OF THEIR WAY TO COME TO EARTH IF IT'S BEEN SEALED OFF...?
DOES THIS PLANET HAVE SOME KIND OF VALUE OR SOMETHING..?
THAT ALONE DOESN'T EXPLAIN WHY EARTH IS BEING TARGETED...


UM...


I GET IT...
I—I'M HERE BECAUSE... THE SURROUNDING PLANETS WERE TARGETING US...
じっ
はっ
IT SEEMS THAT EARTH WAS MEANT TO BECOME A SECOND ORBELIO.
THAT'S WHY I WAS SENT ON A MISSION AND CAME HERE...
BUT IN THE END, I FAILED AND ORBELIO WAS DESTROYED, SO I'M NOT QUITE SURE WHY THEY'RE STILL TARGETING THIS PLANET.
HMM...
ALL RIGHT. AS I PROMISED I WILL INFORM YOU OF WHAT HAPPENED TEN YEARS AGO.
COME HERE, NOZOMI.
I'D RATHER NOT HAVE ANY FALSE MEMORIES
NO NEED TO WORRY. I SWEAR UPON THE GODS OF HEAVEN AND EARTH THAT I WILL ONLY TELL YOU THAT WHICH IS TRUE.


UNLIKE HOW KOICHI EXPERIENCED THEM, I WILL SIMPLY GIVE YOU THE MEMORIES DIRECTLY.
GRAND-MOTHER, TELL ME TOO WHEN YOU'RE DONE!
I wanna know too!
ONLY IF THESE TWO ALLOW IT.
UM... IF THERE'S A DIFFERENT WAY TO DO THIS, I THINK I'D RATHER DO THAT.
I'M NOT REALLY COMFORTABLE WITH THIS WAY.
HM... VERY WELL.
IS THIS BETTER?
...YES.


SENPAI'S GOING TO LEARN ABOUT WHAT HAPPENED TEN YEARS AGO..
SENPAI!
.....
WHAT'S WRONG, KOICHI?


OOTORI-SENPAI!
.....
WHAAAT?


?
NO...
WHAT!? HOW AM I SUPPOSED TO HELP IF I DON'T KNOW WHAT'S GOING ON!?
NO.
NOW IT'S MY TURN, RIGHT? IT'S OKAY IF SHE TELLS ME TOO, RIGHT?

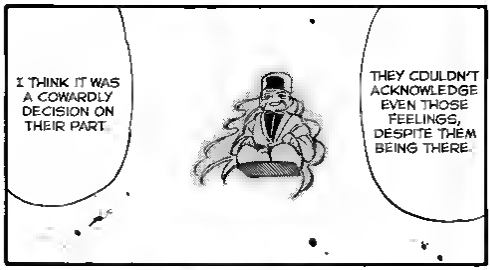

AFTER THIS, YOU CAN LOOK INTO HIROSE-KUN'S AND MY MEMORIES, BUT ONLY FOR INFORMATION YOU ABSOLUTELY NEED.
UNDER-STOOD.
ABSO-LUTELY NOT.
JUST ONE MORE THING .. THIS ISN'T A CONFESSION OR ANYTHING OF THE SORT, BUT...

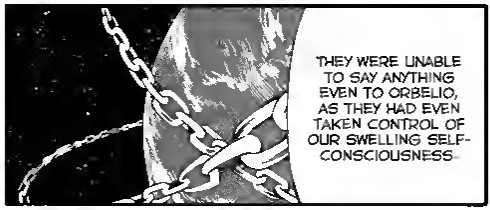

I GREW TIRED OF BEING ON ERAMEA.
?
WOULD YOU LIKE TO HEAR THE OTHER REASON WHY I LEFT ERAMEA?
YES.
BUT IT WAS ONLY ERAMEA'S PEACE.
BUT THEY DIDN'T LIKE WAR, SO THEY JUST WANTED TO KEEP THE PEACE, RIGHT?
ORBELIO WANTED TO SPREAD THE POWER IT HAD THROUGH EVERY CORNER OF THE UNIVERSE, WHILE MY ANCESTORS, THE ERAMEANS, SIMPLY WATCHED...
THEY FOOLISHLY BELIEVED THAT THEY WERE THE ONLY INTELLIGENT LIFE NEEDED IN THE UNIVERSE.
HOWEVER...
ORBELIO SOUGHT TO ANNIHILATE THE INTELLIGENT LIFE .. THE HUMANS WHO DWELLED ON THIS PLANET, IN THEIR BID FOR ADVANCEMENT.


ERAMEA WAS NATURALLY BLESSED WITH PEACE..
THE ERAMEANS SAW THIS AND DID NOTHING TO STOP IT.
FOOD AND WATER WERE ALWAYS IN ABUNDANCE, AND THERE ISN'T A SINGLE RECORD OF WAR IN THE ENTIRE ERAMEAN HISTORY.
WE ERAMEANS KNOW NOTHING ABOUT STRIFE. OUR KNOWLEDGE OF BATTLE IS LACKING.
HOWEVER, THIS IS A PART OF REALITY, AS MUCH AS THE ERAMEANS TRIED TO DENY THIS WITH THEIR HOPES TO THE CONTRARY.
MY ANCESTORS WISHED TO OBSERVE THE UNIVERSE FOR THEMSELVES.
TO UNDER-STAND HOW THE UNIVERSE WORKS, TO OBSERVE THE STARS UNTIL THEY DIE, THEY WERE ENTRANCED WITH A DESIRE TO OBSERVE EVERYTHING FULLY.
THEY WERE AFRAID THAT IF THEY ALLOWED THEMSELVES, THEY WOULD TAKE THEIR OBSERVATIONS TOO FAR.




THEY HAD TO FIRST ENSURE THEIR OWN SAFETY BEFORE THEY WOULD OBSERVE ANYTHING ELSE.


I THINK IT WAS A COWARDLY DECISION ON THEIR PART.
THEY COULDN'T ACKNOWLEDGE EVEN THOSE FEELINGS, DESPITE THEM BEING THERE.


THEY WERE UNABLE TO SAY ANYTHING EVEN TO ORBELIO, AS THEY HAD EVEN TAKEN CONTROL OF OUR SWELLING SELF-CONSCIOUSNESS.

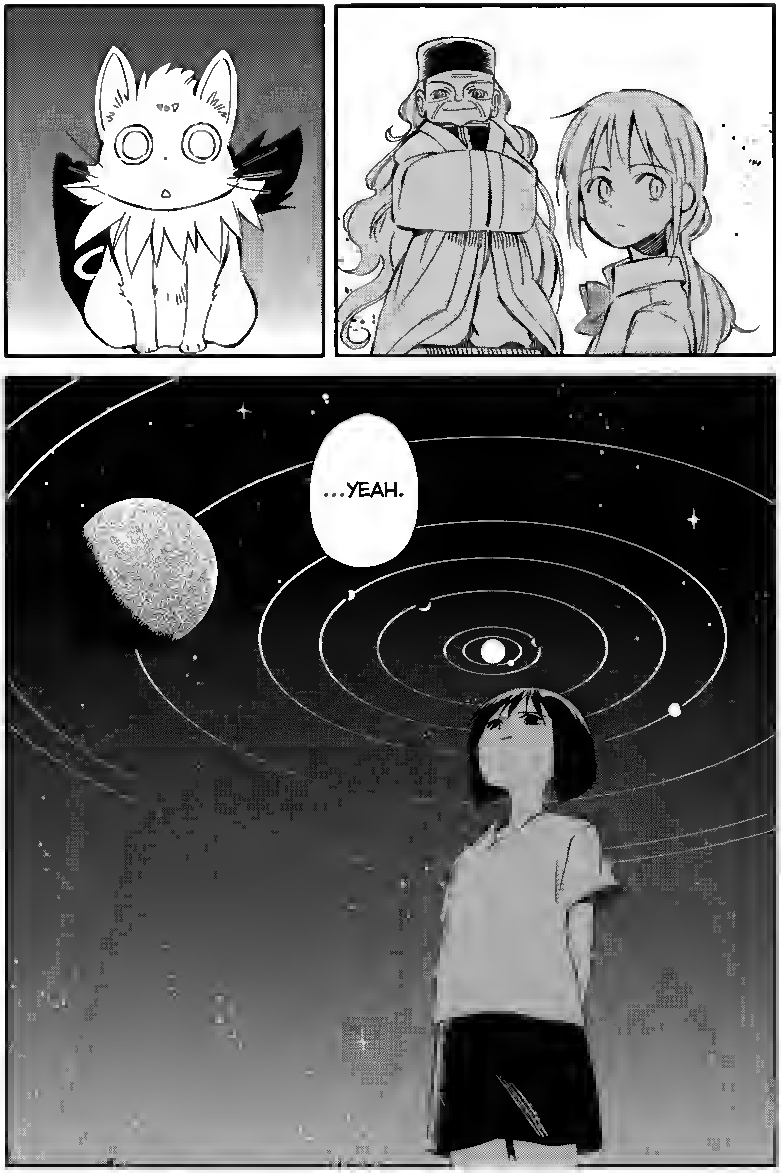

HOWEVER, THIS IS WHAT I THINK NOW.


IN THE END, ALL THEY DID WAS OBSERVE ORBELIO'S ACTIONS, UNTIL ALL THAT WAS LEFT WERE THE ERAMEANS. IT WAS THAT ALONE THAT SUPPORTED THE ERAMEANS' FAINT SENSE OF JUSTICE.
THAT STIFF ATMOSPHERE PERMEATED THE ENTIRE PLANET... AND I COULDN'T BEAR IT


WE MUST FIGHT TO PROTECT THE EARTH.
IT IS IN MY NATURE TO BE AN OBSERVER, BUT I AM FED UP WITH SIMPLY WATCHING FROM THE SIDE.
UNTIL THIS BODY HAS COMPLETELY ROTTED AWAY, I WILL CONTINUE TO USE MY STRENGTH FOR THIS PLANET.
THIS TIME, I WON'T SIMPLY WATCH IT GO BY...
FOR THIS PLANET IS MY HOME NOW.
.....
I DON'T...
RIGHT NOW, YOUR EXISTENCE HAS ONLY WANED A LITTLE.
IF YOU TRULY WISH TO BE HERE, THEN YOUR EXISTENCE WILL RETURN TO WHAT IT ONCE WAS
KNOW IF I HAVE THAT CONVICTION...


SENPAI.
IF I WISH.
ORBELIO IS GONE. .
BUT I THINK YOU STILL HAVE THE SAME RESOLVE YOU HAD WHEN YOU DECIDED ON YOUR NAME TEN YEARS AGO.
SO I THINK YOU CAN DO IT. YOU CAN MAKE THIS PLANET YOUR NEW HOME.

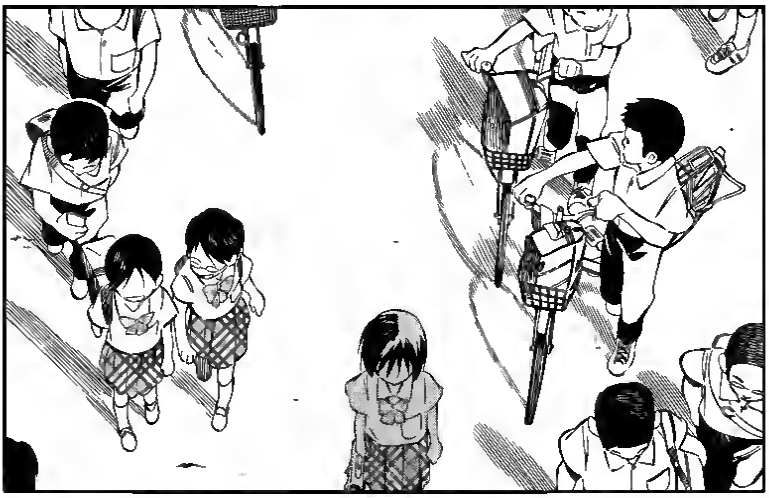

I WONDER IF THAT DAY WILL EVER COME...
I'M SURE IT WILL!


...YEAH.

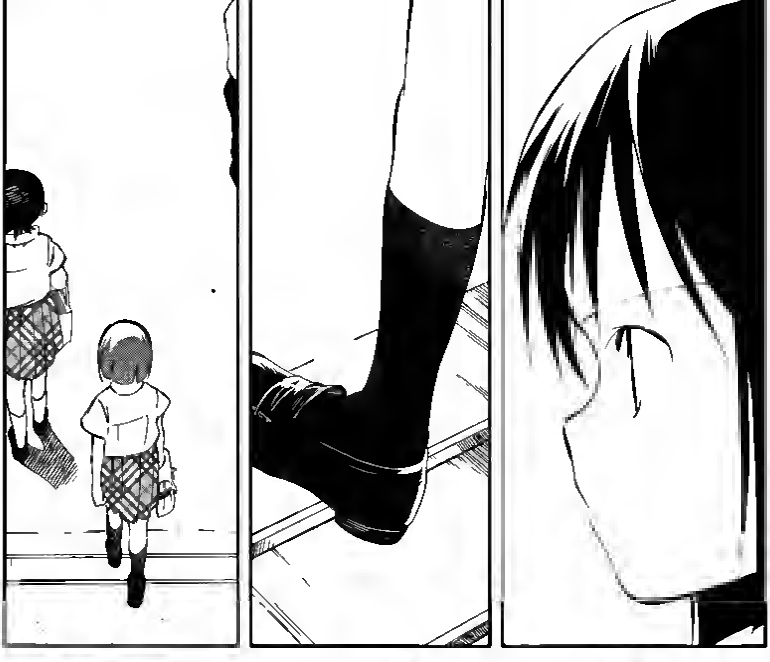

AH!

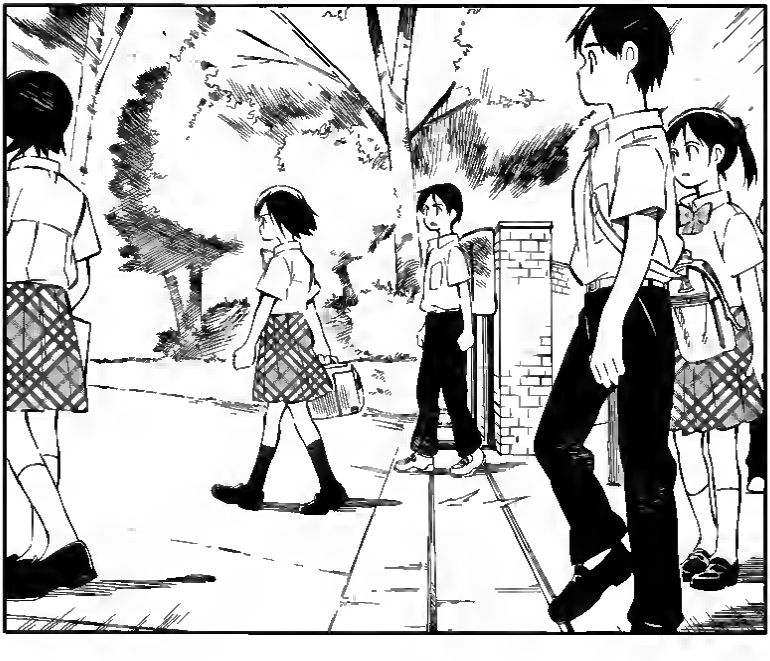

MM.
GOOD MORNING, AYLA-SAN!
WHERE'S NOZOMI?
SHE'S NOT HERE YET
WAS SHE OKAY AFTER WE GOT BACK YESTERDAY?
SHE SEEMED A LITTLE OUT OF IT WHEN SHE WENT HOME...
FIGURES
I'D LIKE TO SAY THAT IF SHE'S BACK TO HER CURRENT SELF, SHE'LL BE FINE, BUT...
AH, SHE'S HERE!
STILL, NOZOMI'S POWERS TEN YEARS AGO WERE AMAZING,
SO DOING SOMETHING ON THE LEVEL OF TAKING STUDENTS' MEMORIES ISN'T IMPOSSIBLE...



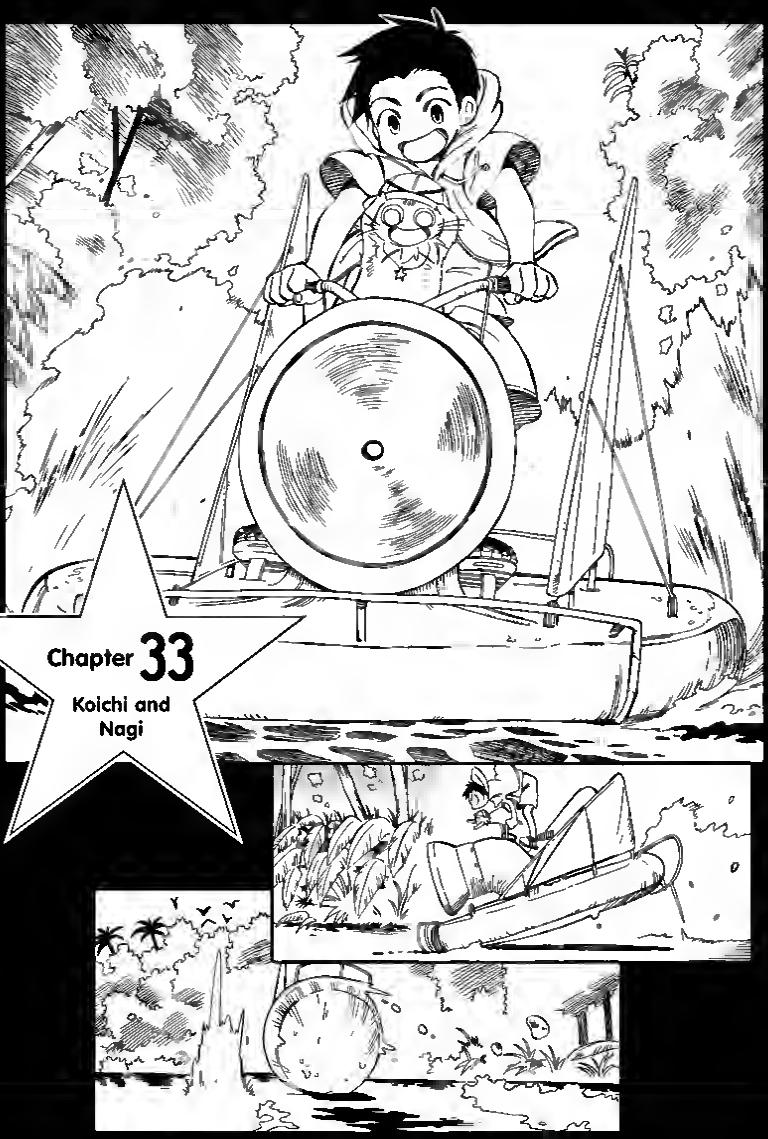









SO... THIS SHOULD BE OKAY, RIGHT?
SEEMS THAT WAY.
IF YOU TRULY WISH TO BE HERE...
WELCOME BACK, SENPAI!
I'M HOME.


Chapter 33
Koichi and Nagi

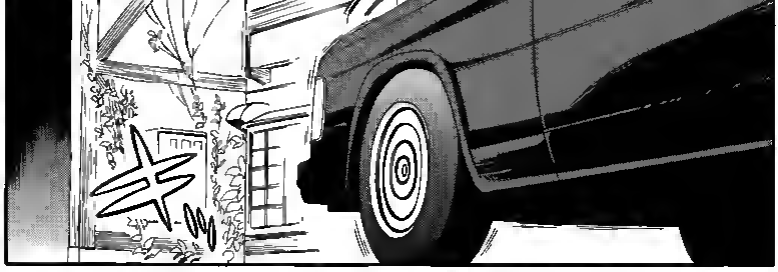

BY THE WAY, WHY WEREN'T WE ABLE TO GET A FIX ON YOUR TRACKER DURING THE FIGHT WITH THAT ALIEN?
YOU SAID YOU'D TAKE IT WITH YOU BECAUSE YOU WERE TAKING ACTION SEPARATELY FROM KOICHI, DIDN'T YOU?
AH...
YES, I DID SAY THAT...
YOU WERE SO EXCITED THAT YOU FORGOT TO TAKE IT?
WHAT THE HECK!?
ARE YOU LITERALLY BRAIN-DEAD!?
BUT, BUT...
THE MOMENT I TOOK THE FIRST STEP, I FELT LIKE I WAS GETTING CLOSE TO SOMETHING REALLY NOSTALGIC.
I GOT COMPLETELY CAUGHT UP IN IT


WOULD YOU BE ABLE TO FIGHT HER, SENPAI?
DON'T WORRY
IF SHE WERE TO APPEAR BEFORE YOU AGAIN...
I'D LIKE TO SEE HER MYSELF. IF SHE LOOKS LIKE YOU AS A CHILD, SO SHE MUST HAVE THE MOST DARLING AND VOMIT-INDUCING LITTLE FACE.
I HAVE *QUITE* A FEW THINGS I'D LIKE TO ASK HER.
IF I DO SEE HER AGAIN, THOUGH,
GET LOST AND DO WHAT!? IF IT WEREN'T FOR ME, KOICHI WOULDN'T EVEN BE HERE NOW!
GET LOST, AYLA!
NOW I KNOW THE TRUTH ABOUT WHAT HAPPENED TEN YEARS AGO,
SO I CAN ONLY KEEP MOVING FORWARD.
SHE CONDEMNS ME FOR BEING THE REASON ORBELIO WAS DESTROYED... AND WHILE THAT SADDENS ME, THERE WAS NOTHING I COULD DO SINCE I ONLY HAD FRAGMENTS OF MY MEMORY.


KEEP IT DOWN IN THE HALLS.
S-SORRY.
GOOD MORNING
...
FIIIINE.
OOTORI!
WE'RE SWITCHING UNIFORMS NEXT WEEK, SO MAKE SURE YOU'RE WEARING THE REGULATION CLOTHES,
Hmph.


OH COME ON, IT WASN'T THAT BAD
KOBAYASHI-SENSEI'S MEMORY IS BAAACK!!
THANK GOOD-NESS...
ほっ
THAT'S RIGHT! DO YOU HAVE ANY IDEA HOW AWKWARD IT WAS FOR US!?
YOU DIDN'T EXPERIENCE IT FOR YOURSELF, SO YOU DON'T GET TO TALK!
HEHEH...
HE...
SEE YA.
WELL, SEE YOU LATER, HIROSE-KUN.

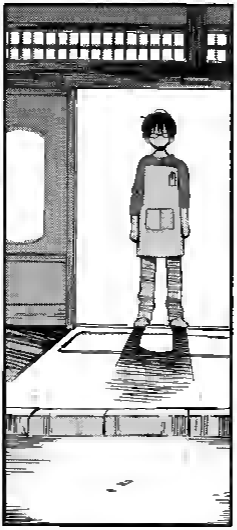

HUH? HEY KOICHI, WHERE'S NAGI?
HE'S PROBABLY NOT COMING TODAY.
AND HE LOOKED PRETTY HEALTHY LATELY!
DANG.
LAST NIGHT...
天の海

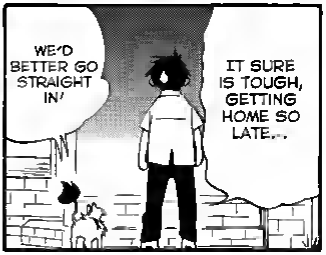


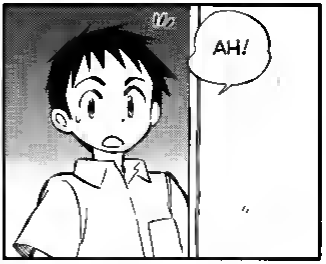

NOZOMI STILL WON'T TELL ME WHAT SHE AND GRANDMOTHER TALKED ABOUT! ONE WAY OR ANOTHER, I'M GOING TO FIND OUT WHAT HAPPENED TEN YEARS AGO!


THANKS FOR DROPPING US OFF.
IT'S NO BIG DEAL.


AH.




WE'D BETTER GO STRAIGHT IN!
IT SURE IS TOUGH, GETTING HOME SO LATE...


AH!


ROASTED COFFEE AND TEA CAFE
HEAVEN'S OCEAN
WE'RE CLOSED ALREADY, BUT I THOUGHT I SAW SOMEONE OUTSIDE.
IT'S ALREADY CLOSING TIME...?
RYU-NII!
I THOUGHT IT WAS YOU, KOICHI! YOU SURE ARE LATE TODAY.
YOU KNOW, TODAY, TAKI...
HUH?


THEY SURE BOUGHT A LOT OF MANGA.
WE'VE GOT A LOT OF REGULARS.
OUR GRANDFATHER WAS CHILDHOOD FRIENDS WITH THE PREVIOUS MANAGER, AND THE TWO OF THEM DECIDED TO COMBINE THEIR FAVORITE THINGS, WHICH LED TO THE OF THE HOUYADO BOOK STORE AND HEAVEN'S OCEAN OPENING.
I JUST NOTICED
WHEN DID YOU TWO GET ALL BUDDY-BUDDY?
IT WAS THE PREVIOUS MANAGER'S HOBBY WE'RE NEAR A UNIVERSITY AFTER ALL, SO THERE WERE A LOT OF TECHNICAL BOOKS NOW IT'S PRIMARILY A PICTURE BOOK FAIR
!!
THIS CERTAINLY IS AN INTERESTING HOBBY.
IT'S NOT LIKE WE'RE PARTICULARLY CLOSE OR ANYTHING, RIGHT?
HUH? IS THAT SO?
UH, THAT'S...
.....
Y-YEAH, WE'RE JUST ACQUAINTANCES...
IS IT OKAY IF I GO BACK TO HEAVEN'S OCEAN THROUGH HERE?
HEAVEN'S OCEAN


I SEE.
WELL .. THE STORE IS CLOSED, SO ..
I'LL COME AGAIN.
I DON'T GET ANYTHING ABOUT THAT GIRL..
SHE'LL COME AGAIN, SHE SAYS ..
ピョン!
ウィー
OW!!
TODAY ..
OH, YOU SHOULD THANK NAGI.


KOO-OO!!!!!!!-CH!!!!!
THE HECK WAS THAT FOR NAGI!?
EH EH
WHY WOULD YOU...
TAKI TOOK OFF TODAY. HE HAD A FEVER.
SERI-OUSLY!?
NOT ONLY DID I HAVE TO BRING YOUR BAGS BACK, BUT I HAD TO WORK IN YOUR PLACE TOO! I'M NOT GONNA LET YOU OFF EASY...
HUH?
'SMATTER, KOICHI? YA HUNGRY? WANT SOMETHIN' TO EAT?
Y YEAH
WELL AS LUCK WOULD HAVE IT, I WAS JUST ABOUT TO ENJOY SOME DESSERT AFTER WORKING MY BUTT OFF!
PERHAPS I'LL EVEN SHARE SOME WITH YOU
CLAP CLAP
CLAP CLAP


HI, GRAMPS.
WELCOME BACK, KOICHI.
HEY GRAMPS, KOICHI'S BACK.
AND I'M DONE WITH THE CLEANING, SO I'M TAKING FIVE.
ALRIGHT, GOOD WORK.
I KNOW YOU'RE IN HIGH SCHOOL NOW, BUT IF YOU'RE COMING BACK LATE, GIVE ME A CALL.
OKAY...
DON'T'CHA THINK YOU'VE GOT A BIT TOO MUCH DESSERT THERE?
LIKE HELL I'D HAVE DONE ALL THAT WORK IF I WEREN'T GETTING ALL THIS!
Y'KNOW, KOICHI...
HMM?


YOU GOTTA DO YOUR PART AND HELP OUT AROUND THE SHOP!
YOU'RE THE ONE WHO'S GONNA TAKE OVER, AREN'T YOU?
SORRY!
HEHE HEHEH. . .
JUST KIDDING! BEIN' A WET BLANKET LIKE THAT ISN'T MY STYLE!
AS LONG AS YOU'RE THANKFUL FOR MY KINDNESS, THAT'S GOOD ENOUGH!
YEAH!
THANKS A TON, NAGI!


Y-YEAH...
HOWS OOTORI-SENPAI DOING? IS SHE GONNA COME BACK?
BY THE WAY...
REALLY NOW...
EVERYTHING SHOULD BE BACK TO NORMAL BY TOMORROW
I'M ALREADY WELL AWARE THAT WHAT SENPAI DID CAN'T BE TAKEN BACK, AND I UNDERSTAND WHY YOU CAN'T FORGIVE HER.
BUT... HOW DO I PUT THIS, I FEEL LIKE IT'S PARTLY MY FAULT TOO.
YOUR FAULT?
AND WHY ARE *YOU* ABLE TO BE SO CHUMMY WITH HER? YOU *DO* REALIZE WHAT KIND OF FATE LINKS YOU TWO, RIGHT?
TEN YEARS AGO, SHE...
NAGI... YOU REALLY CAN'T FORGIVE OOTORI-SENPAI CAN YOU?
NOPE.


MHM!
.....
I STILL ACTED TOGETHER WITH HER.
I FIRST MET HER WHEN I RAN AWAY TEN YEARS AGO.
WHILE IT WASN'T LIKE I COULD DO ANYTHING TO HELP HER...
AND AFTER THAT... TEN YEARS AGO, I DIED.


AND THEN SENPAI GAVE ME HER HEART... THANKS TO HER DOING THAT, I WAS ABLE TO CONTINUE LIVING.
IT'S THANKS TO THE POWER OF SENPAI'S HEART THAT I'M STILL ALIVE.
IF I DIDN'T HAVE IT, I WOULDN'T BE HERE RIGHT NOW.
YOU'RE WRONG.
I'M NOT WRONG! NAGI, I'M RIGHT HERE IN FRONT OF YOU, AREN'T I? I'M .
YOU'RE DEAD WRONG ABOUT EVERYTHING, KOICHI!!


I'M NOT THANKING HER.
BUT...
I CAN'T BELIEVE YOU'RE ACTUALLY THANKING HER...
DON'T SCREW AROUND WITH ME...
WHEN SHE GAVE ME HER HEART, SENPAI TOLD ME THAT "THIS IS THE END"...
TODAY, SENPAI "LEARNED" ABOUT WHAT HAPPENED TEN YEARS AGO, BUT COULDN'T "REMEMBER."
IT WAS LIKE OUR BOND... HAD BEEN CUT FOR A MOMENT

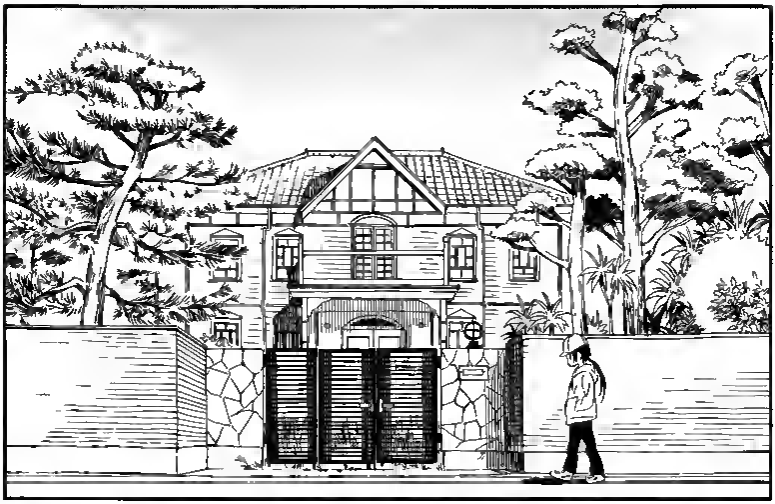

I THINK THAT TEN YEARS AGO, SENPAI DIED TOO.
SHE WAS ABLE TO RETURN THE CITY TO HOW IT WAS BEFORE, BUT WASN'T ABLE TO BRING THE DEAD PEOPLE BACK TO LIFE! BUT NOW, EVEN IF YOU BLAME HER FOR WHAT HAPPENED...
YOU'RE WRONG.
YOU'RE WRONG, KOICHI.
THAT'S NOT WHAT I CAN'T FORGIVE HER FOR...!
!?
THEN WHAT...?

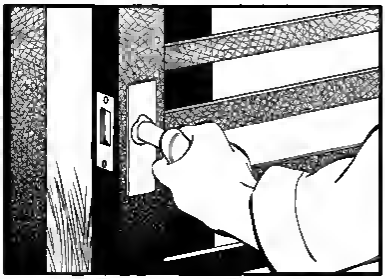

SAY, KOICHI, WHY IS IT THAT YOU'RE WITH HER ANYWAY?
I MADE A PROMISE WITH SENPAI!
THAT WE'D PROTECT THE EARTH TOGETHER...
AT FIRST I DIDN'T BELIEVE HER...
I JUST THOUGHT SHE WAS SOME WEIRD GIRL WITH A FEW SCREWS LOOSE! BUT...
BUT THEN WE STARTED DOING STUFF TOGETHER, AND...

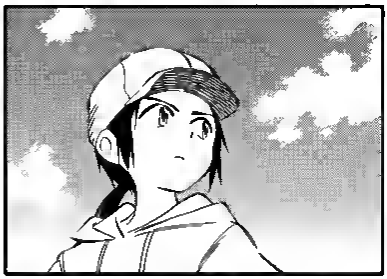

SENPAI ISN'T THE KIND OF PERSON WHO WOULD KILL PEOPLE...
I FEEL LIKE IF I'M WITH HER, I REALLY CAN PROTECT EARTH!
KOICHI.. IT'S SO OBVIOUS THAT YOU'RE LYING.
HUH?
THE TRUTH IS...
YOU REALLY...


YOU KEEP TELLING YOURSELF THAT YOU'RE WITH HER SO YOU CAN PROTECT THE EARTH,
BUT YOU CAN SPOUT ALL THIS HIGH AND MIGHTY CRAP ABOUT A JUST CAUSE ALL YOU WANT...
YOU...


ARE YOU OKAY? HERE, LET ME HELP YOU!
SORRY, I'M CALLING IT A NIGHT..
I JUST GOT A LITTLE DIZZY. THAT'S ALL.
NAGI!?
!!
YOU DON'T THINK I'M USED TO THIS BY NOW?
I'M FINE!
DON'T WORRY ABOUT ME..
NAGI...

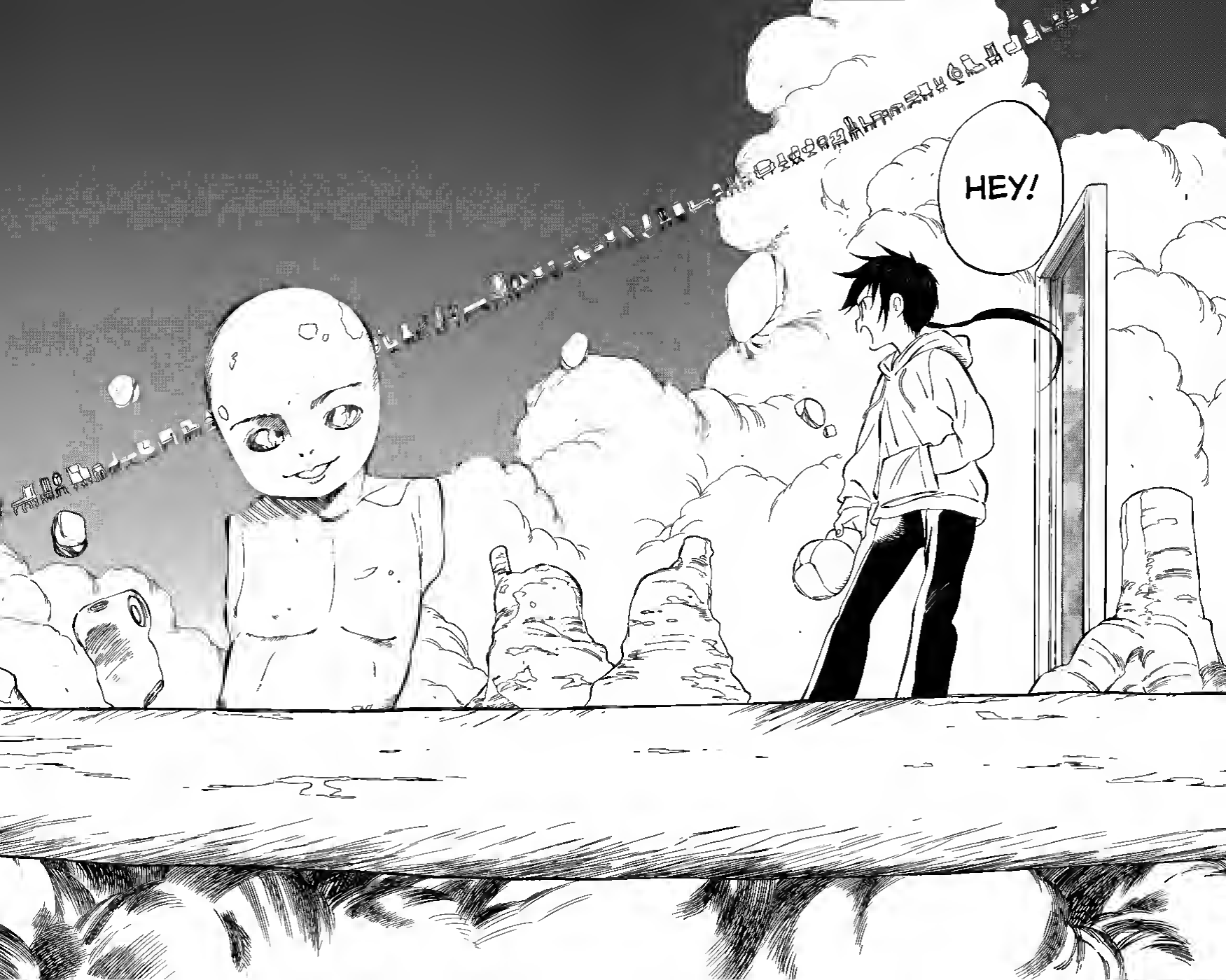


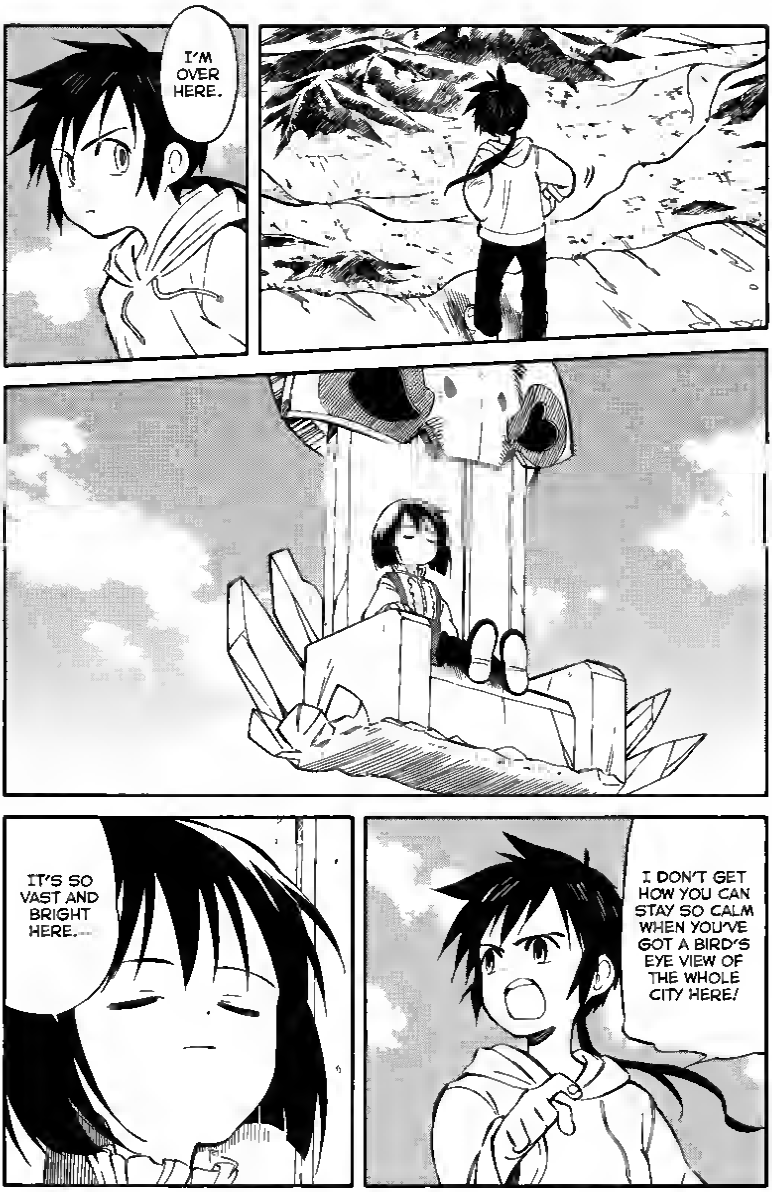







ガチャリ
HEY, MAYA.
WHERE ARE YOU?


HEY!


I'M OVER HERE.
IT'S SO VAST AND BRIGHT HERE...
I DON'T GET HOW YOU CAN STAY SO CALM WHEN YOU'VE GOT A BIRD'S EYE VIEW OF THE WHOLE CITY HERE!


NO ONE CAN LOCK ME UP HERE.
WELCOME, NAGI!
PLAYING SICK TO SKIP SCHOOL... YOU'RE QUITE THE BAD BOY, AREN'T YOU?
YEAH, I DON'T NEED YOU TO WORRY ABOUT ME.
YOU WERE ABLE TO CREATE THIS HUGE SPACE, SO YOU MUST BE POWERFUL, RIGHT?
DO ALL OF YOU ALIENS HAVE THIS KIND OF POWER?
OF COURSE NOT!


JUST THOSE TWO?
ALTHOUGH NEITHER OF THOSE PLANETS EXIST ANYMORE.
ONLY THE ORBELIANS AND ERAMEANS.
ALL THE BEINGS BORN IN THAT SECTOR OF SPACE, STRONG OR WEAK, HAVE SOME SORT OF SPECIAL POWER...
ORBELIO AND ERAMEA WERE IN A SPECIAL SECTOR OF SPACE...
MAYA, CAN YOU CONTROL MEMORIES LIKE OOTORI-SENPAI?
MORE IMPORTANTLY, WHAT DO YOU NEED SO BADLY YOU'D COME ALL THE WAY OUT HERE TO SEE ME?


I DON'T NEED SOMETHING ON THE LEVEL OF WHAT HAPPENED TEN YEARS AGO.
JUST TO ERASE ALL OF KOICHI'S MEMORIES OF SENPAI.
...I CAN'T DO THAT.
KNEW IT.
ヴォン!!


YOUR LITTLE BROTHER HAS THE HEART OF AN ORBELIAN!
YOU HAVE NO IDEA HOW MUCH POWER THAT HEART POSSESSES!!


DON'T COMPARE US!
ビョオオオオ
...FINE.
I'VE LONG BEEN THINKING OF WAYS TO KILL HER, BUT NOW I'VE DECIDED.
I'LL ERASE OOTORI NOZOMI'S EXISTENCE FROM KOICHI TOO.


AND THEN I'LL TAKE THAT POWER AND KILL HER WITH IT!
WHAT'S WITH THAT KNIFE? YOU WHITTLED IT FROM THAT ALIEN'S SWORD AFTER OUR LAST FIGHT, RIGHT? WHEN ARE YOU GONNA USE IT?
I'M "SAVING THE BEST FOR LAST."
IT'S SUCH A GOOD LITTLE TOOL, AND I'M PUTTING THE FINISHING TOUCHES ON IT ..
IT'S STILL A LONG WAY FROM BEING ABLE TO DEFEAT HER, THOUGH...


I CAN STILL MAKE IT EVEN STRONGER...
THIS ISN'T THE FULL EXTENT OF ITS POWER...
JUST WHAT KIND OF HUMAN IS THIS BOY...?
STILL TRYING TO DETERMINE WHAT I CAN DO, ARE WE...?


HE LOVES SWEET THINGS, AND DOESN'T GET STRESSED EASILY...
HE PUTS ON AIRS TO MAKE IT SEEM LIKE HE'S PLAYING AROUND, BUT HE'S REALLY EXTREMELY WATCHFUL OF HIS SURROUNDINGS.. AND EXTREMELY PRUDENT..
BECAUSE HE WAS SICK AS A CHILD, HE'S "RESIGNED HIMSELF," AND DOESN'T GET ATTACHED TO ANYTHING..
THE ONLY THING HE TRULY CARES FOR IS HIS TWIN BROTHER, KOICHI...
YOU ASKED OOTORI NOZOMI A QUESTION..


"WHAT EXACTLY IS IT THAT YOU INTEND TO DO WITH KOICHI?"
WELL, WHAT ABOUT YOU?
WHAT DO YOU INTEND TO DO WITH KOICHI...?
THREE MONTHS AGO AS A LIGHT RAIN FELL ON THE DAY WHEN HE VISITED A GRAVE
THE DAY I FIRST APPROACHED


Chapter 34
Perfect World
THREE MONTHS AGO.
結方家
EVENING.
HEEEY,♪
ARE YOU FREE RIGHT NOW? AWW DON'T MAKE SUCH A GLOOMY FACE
LET'S YOU AND I HAVE A LITTLE CHAT...


AND LET ME MAKE ONE THING CRYSTAL CLEAR...
I AM NOT OOTORI NOZOMI.


Chapter 34
Perfect World


MAYA.
I WANT TO TRAIN MY RIGHT ARM.
LEMME USE THAT ROOM.
HUH?
FORGIVE ME. I WAS THINKING OF SOMETHING.
AS YOU WISH.
ズズ・・・


I DON'T CARE... ACTUALLY,
WHAT KIND OF OPPONENT DO YOU WANT TO FIGHT THIS TIME?
SOMETHING REALLY BIG AND STRONG
OKAY! IT'LL TAKE A BIT OF TIME.
YOU MIGHT NOT BE ABLE TO SEE ANYTHING UNTIL THEN.
BUT YOU SHOULD BE FINE, NAGI.


トン
YOU SHOULD JUST DIE TOO.


HUH?
18
WHERE THE HECK WERE YOU AIMING THAT KICK, KOICHI!?
H-HEY,
IT'S STILL GOING...
5


AH,
WHERE'D THE BALL GO?
KOICHI KICKED IT OFF SCHOOL GROUNDS!
NO, IT'S ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THE BUILDING.
HUH? SERIOUSLY, WHERE IS IT?
WHATEVER.
JUST GO GET IT!
IS SOMETHING WRONG WITH HIROSE-KUN?
I NEED TO TALK TO YOU ABOUT KOICHI...
ABOUT WHAT?


ABOUT WHEN I TRIED TO KILL HIM...
HE WAS WILLING TO SACRIFICE HIMSELF TO SAVE RICO.
HIROSE-KUN WANTS TO SAVE EVERYONE.
HE WAS LIKE THAT IN THE PAST TOO...
HE JUST ISN'T VERY GOOD AT DOING IT.


I USED THAT TRAIT OF HIS TO GET HIM TO FIGHT.
...?
RICO WOULD NEVER BETRAY KOICHI, SO I FIGURED IF KOICHI WERE IN DANGER, THAT WOULD CAUSE RICO TO LEAP INTO ACTION...
BUT I NEVER THOUGHT KOICHI HAD SOMETHING LIKE "THAT."


THIS IS JUST WHAT I THINK FROM WATCHING KOICHI DURING THAT FIGHT, BUT...


IT LOOKS LIKE HE'S COMPLETELY ABSORBED YOUR HEART.
HORRIBLE WORDS FROM A HORRIBLE FACE...


I SAID THAT TO KOICHI, HUH...
THAT'S RIGHT.
I HATED KOICHI BACK THEN.
WOW! THEY'RE COMPLETELY IDENTICAL!
THEY EVEN DO AND WEAR THE SAME THINGS!
THEY REALLY ARE TWINS!
YOU'RE WRONG
THE SAME FACE,
THE SAME VOICE,
EVEN THE SAME HEIGHT!
THEY'RE EXACTLY THE SAME!
I SAID, YOU'RE WRONG


MY BODY AND HEART WILL FAIL BEFORE I GROW UP,
AND HE'S THE ONLY ONE WHO'LL SURVIVE.
WHY DOES IT HAVE TO BE LIKE THAT?
IT'S NOT FAIR!
THANK YOU!
IF KOICHI THANKS THEM, I HAVE TO TOO.
...THANK YOU!
They're both such good children!


WHILE I PRETEND TO BE A GOOD KID
THE FACES THE ADULTS MAKE AS THEY GLARE AT ME.
EVERYONE LOOKS LIKE AN ENEMY TO ME.
WHAT A LAID-BACK GUY.
"THANK YOU."
I HAVE TO MAKE IT SOUND MORE NATURAL...
"THANK YOU..."
I'M TIRED...
KOICHI GETS TO LIVE ON WHILE I'LL DIE WHEN I'M STILL A KID.


THAT'S WHY I COULDN'T HELP BUT SAY THAT.
YOU SHOULD JUST DIE TOO.
OKAY, NAGI.
BUT THEN EVERYTHING CHANGED



AND THEN SOMETHING INSIDE ME CLICKED.



I, WHO HATED EVERYTHING IN THE WORLD..

FINALLY FELT LIKE EVERYTHING WAS PERFECT.



KOICHI'S GONNA DIE!!

WHEN I REALIZED THAT, I WAS SO HAPPY!



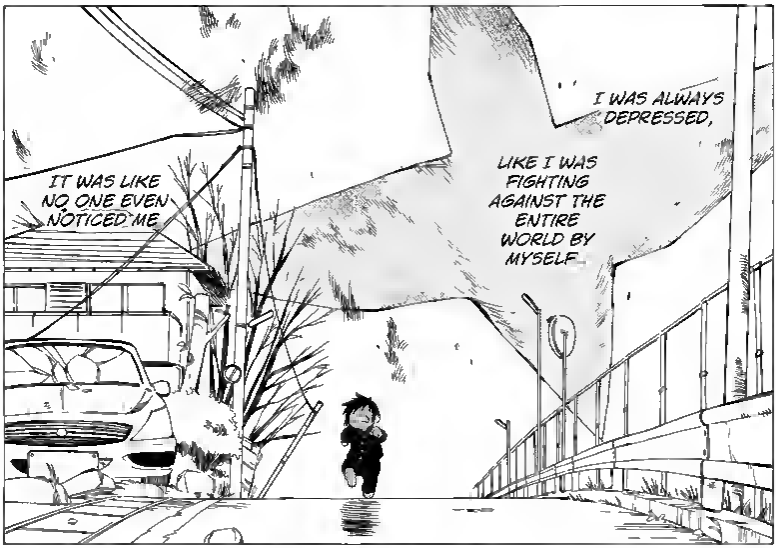

HEY, RYUU-NII.
HMM?
KOICHI AND I ARE SHORTER THAN THE OTHER KIDS OUR AGE.
YEAH.


IT'S NOT FAIR.
BUT GRAMPS IS HUGE, AND YOU'VE BEEN GETTING BIGGER TOO LATELY.
FROM WHAT I'VE HEARD, GRAMPS WAS SHORT WHEN HE WAS A KID TOO.
WAIT, WHAT!?
OUR FAMILY'S ALL LATE BLOOMERS
??
NO NEED TO WORRY ABOUT IT THOUGH. YOU GUYS'LL SHOOT RIGHT UP ALL OF A SUDDEN WHEN YOU'RE OLDER.
.....
OKAY!
WHEN WE'RE OLDER...
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THEN KOICHI'S NEVER GONNA CHANGE.
..HUH?

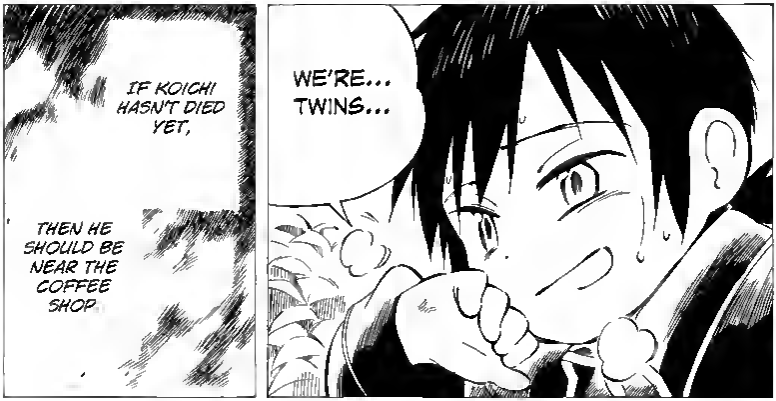

!?
KOICHI...
I...
I WANT..
WHERE ARE YOU...?
HOW COME I'M NOT THERE...? WAIT FOR ME...


I WANT TO BE THERE TOO!
KOI-CHIIII!
TAKE ME WITH YOU!
DON'T LEAVE ME!
DON'T LEAVE ME ALL ALONE...


NAGI...
OKAY,
ドガガ
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I WAS ALWAYS DEPRESSED,
LIKE I WAS FIGHTING AGAINST THE ENTIRE WORLD BY MYSELF
IT WAS LIKE NO ONE EVEN NOTICED ME


AFTER ALL..
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BUT KOICHI SAW THROUGH ALL THAT


IF KOICHI HASN'T DIED YET,
THEN HE SHOULD BE NEAR THE COFFEE SHOP
WE'RE... TWINS...

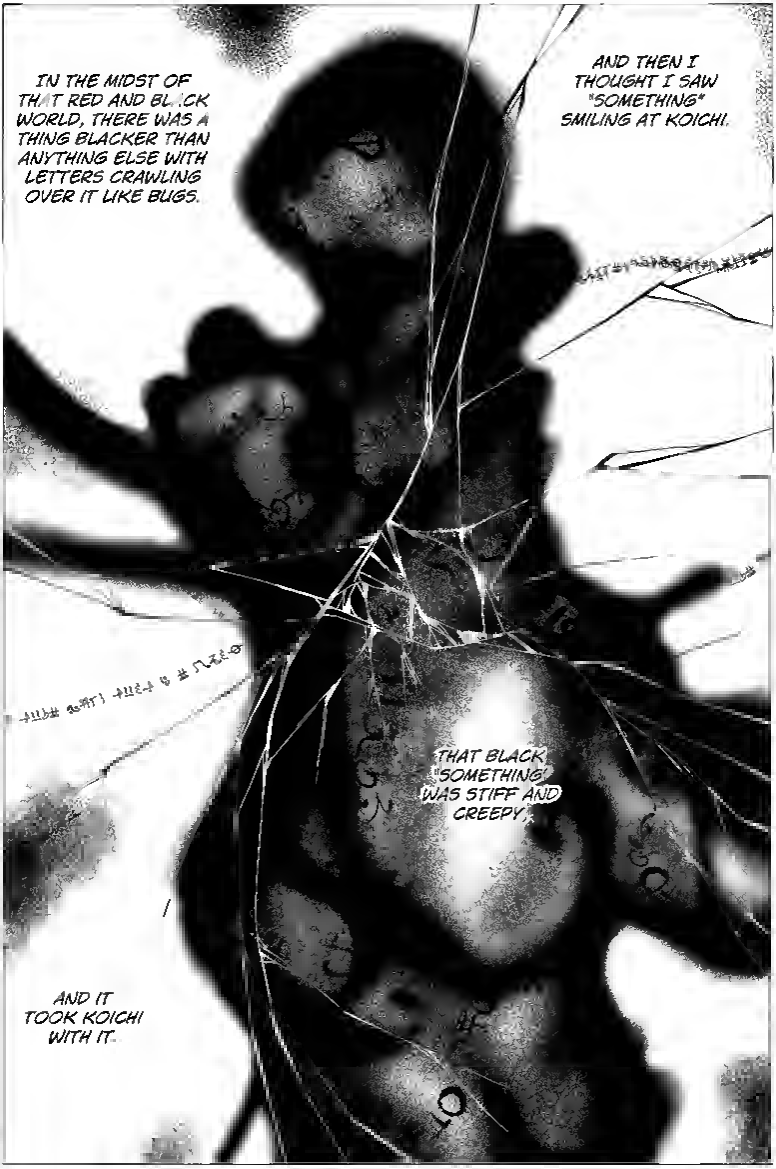

KOICHI!!!
IT'S OBVIOUS.
THE WORLD IS FINALLY PERFECT FOR ME AND KOICHI.
KOI-CHII-IIII!!!
IT BECAME PERFECT FOR US.
I KNEW I WAS GOING TO DIE,
AND THAT MADE ME AT PEACE.
I HAD FINALLY COME TO LOVE KOICHI.


AS LONG AS KOICHI AND I WERE TOGETHER... THE WORLD WAS COMPLETE...
THIS...
THIS IS...

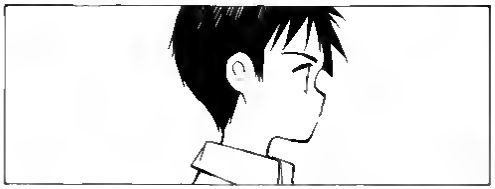
A PERFECT WORLD!

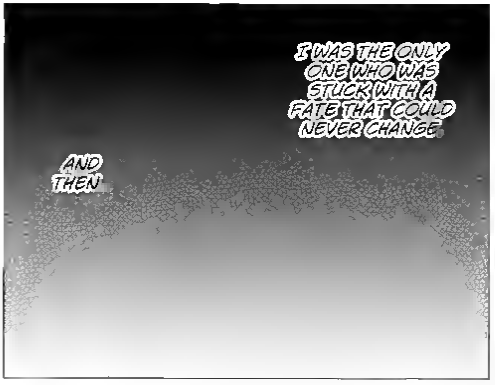

IT'S...
FINALLY OVER...
I'M WITH KOICHI...
SORRY FOR CAUSING YOU SO MUCH TROUBLE...
THANK YOU..


WHAT I THOUGHT...
THAT'S...
GOOD NIGHT...

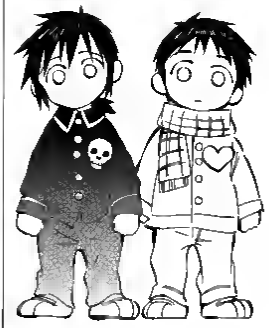

IN THE MIDST OF THAT RED AND BLACK WORLD, THERE WAS A THING BLACKER THAN ANYTHING ELSE WITH LETTERS CRAWLING OVER IT LIKE BUGS.
AND THEN I THOUGHT I SAW "SOMETHING" SMILING AT KOICHI.
THAT BLACK "SOMETHING" WAS STIFF AND CREEPY.
AND IT TOOK KOICHI WITH IT.







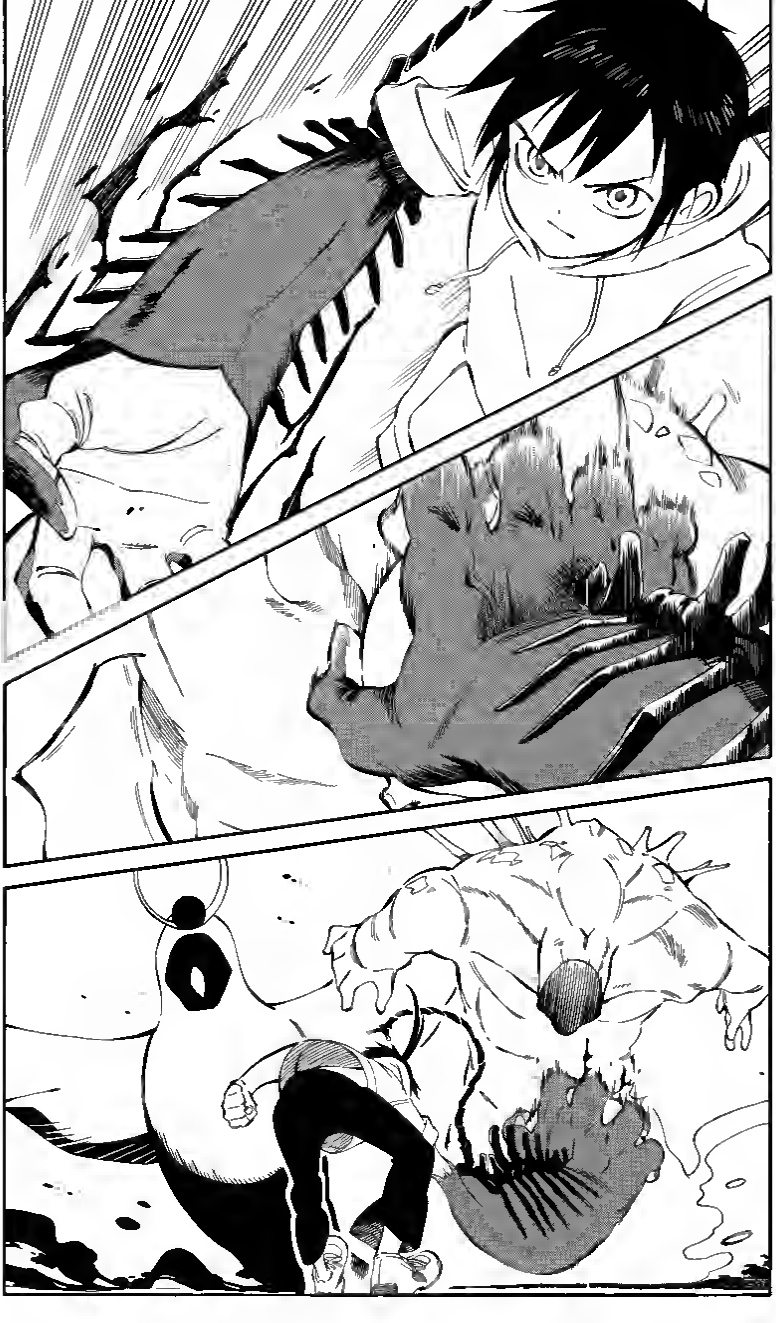
IT GAVE KOICHI A NEW LIFE, THE HEART THAT I NEVER HAD




IN MAY, WHEN I HAPPENED TO SNEAK INTO THE AMUSEMENT PARK...
MEMORIES FLOODED MY HEAD AS MY ENTIRE BODY WENT NUMB.
IT WAS THAT FACE.

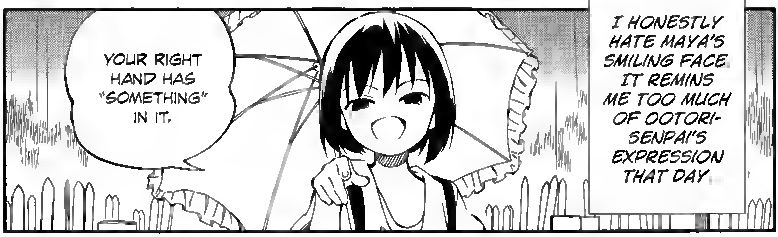

SHE CAME BACK!!
THE ONE WHO STOLE KOICHI FROM ME!
SHE'S TOO POWERFUL..
THERE'S NOTHING I CAN DO ABOUT HER AS I AM NOW
SO I WAITED FOR A TIME WHEN I COULD UNMASK HER...
AFTER ALL, I'M USED TO JUST WAITING... LIVING WITHOUT DOING ANYTHING...
...NAGI.

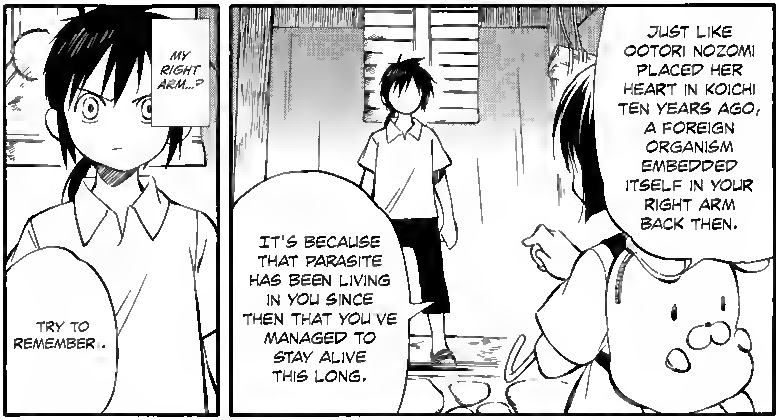

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THEY'RE READY
HERE THEY COME
DON'T THEY EVER GO AWAY?
THE MARKS ARE STILL THERE...
……
HOW'S YOUR RIGHT ARM?
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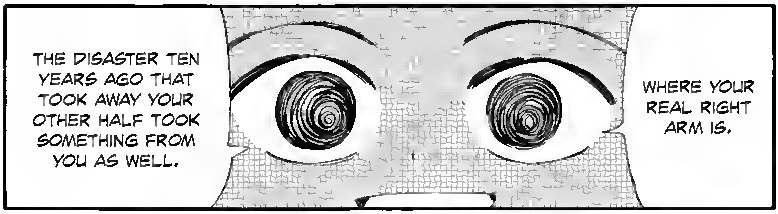





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Pant
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THAT ARM IS DIFFICULT FOR ANY NON-MECHANICAL BEING... ANYONE NOT FROM THE GOZ SYSTEM TO CONTROL
YOU'LL NEED TO MATCH YOUR AFFINITY WITH IT TO BE ABLE TO USE IT WELL IN A FIGHT
I KNOW THAT!
I KNOW THAT...!
MAYA WAS THE ONE WHO TOLD ME ABOUT THIS ARM.


I HONESTLY HATE MAYA'S SMILING FACE. IT REMINDS ME TOO MUCH OF OOTORI-SENPAI'S EXPRESSION THAT DAY.
YOUR RIGHT HAND HAS "SOMETHING" IN IT.


JUST LIKE OOTORI NOZOMI PLACED HER HEART IN KOICHI TEN YEARS AGO, A FOREIGN ORGANISM EMBEDDED ITSELF IN YOUR RIGHT ARM BACK THEN.
IT'S BECAUSE THAT PARASITE HAS BEEN LIVING IN YOU SINCE THEN THAT YOU'VE MANAGED TO STAY ALIVE THIS LONG.
MY RIGHT ARM...?
TRY TO REMEMBER.


THE DISASTER TEN YEARS AGO THAT TOOK AWAY YOUR OTHER HALF TOOK SOMETHING FROM YOU AS WELL.
WHERE YOUR REAL RIGHT ARM IS.

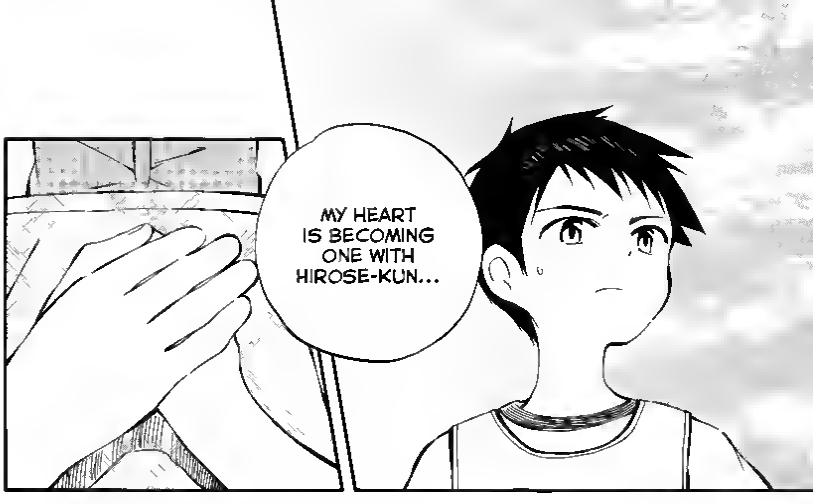

FROM ME..?
ゴゴゴゴ


UGH...
UUUH...


AND THAT ARM...
AN ORBELIAN REPLACED YOUR MISSING RIGHT ARM.
HAS THE POWER TO SURPASS THAT WEAKLING OOTORI NOZOMI.


MAKE MORE OF THEM...!!
I HAVE TO LEARN HOW TO CONTROL THIS THING BETTER..
THIS ISN'T GOOD ENOUGH!

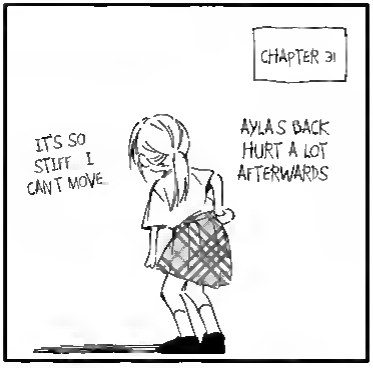

I HAVE TO MAKE THIS POWER MINE...

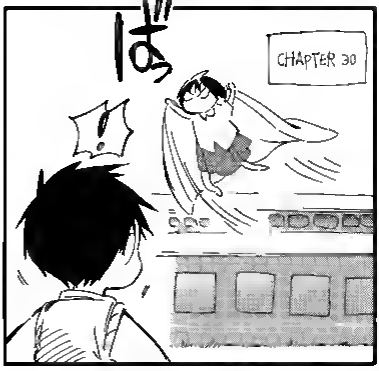

MY HEART IS BECOMING ONE WITH HIROSE-KUN...




TO BE CONTINUED IN VOLUME 8!

BONUS DRAWINGS













THEN THEY WENT OUTSIDE


ALYA'S BIG PROBLEM
AYLA DECIDED TO CUT HER HAIR AFTER GETTING A VISION OF HER FUTURE APPEARANCE
UGH I CAN'T BRING MYSELF TO DO IT...
DON'T BE SO HASTY AYLA!
SHE WEARS A HAT YEAR IN AND YEAR OUT
DO YOU SERIOUSLY THINK THAT'S WHAT GRANDMA LOOKS LIKE?
SO SHE'S GOT TO LOOK LIKE THIS BY NOW!!
GO APOLOGIZE TO ALL THE PEOPLE IN THE WORLD WHO WEAR HATS
Beer! It's cheap!
BOTTI Q
THANK YOU EACH AND EVERY TIME.
ARATA IRI-CHAN
CURRENTLY SERIALIZING "NOROI NO AI CHAN" IN MEBAE AND "KOWARETE ITEMO KAMAIMASEN" IN YOUNG COMIC ! VOLUME 1 OF THE LATTER IS ON SALE!